

John
and Yoko:
In Bed
Again!

ROLLING STONE

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'Don't give me no
plastic saddle, Hollywood,
I want to feel that
leather when
I ride'





"John: 'Yes, I still think it. Kids are more influenced by us than Jesus.'"

BOOSTING PEACE: JOHN AND YOKO IN CANADA

BY RITCHIE YORKE

TORONTO—It started like a pretty normal Sunday. The churches and synagogues were filled, the radio news bulletins beamed out the latest on wars and starving people and sales. From the TV came more news than you needed about the astronauts. Spring was clinging to the trees.

Then it changed. An Air Canada flight from the Bahamas landed at Toronto International Airport and discharged a load of returning holiday makers, including the Lennon family. Literally from out of the blue, John Lennon, wife Yoko Ono, her five-year-old daughter Kyoko, publicist Derek Taylor plus two members of the Beatles' film crew arrived in this staid, conservative capital of Canada.

Immigration authorities, who were well aware of the difficulty Lennon had encountered in obtaining a renewal of his U.S. visa, were as much (or more) surprised than we were. John Lennon in Toronto! It was astounding.

Twenty-four hours later, the Lennon entourage returned to the airport and flew to Montreal, where they began a week-long bed-in for peace (at midnight on Monday May 26) on the 19th floor of the Queen Elizabeth Hotel. To an observer, the 24 hours seemed like a life-

time in the fast-moving 20th century. First of all, Lennon was detained for two hours while immigration officials debated whether he should be allowed into Canada as a desirable alien. After all, Lennon had a conviction for possession of drugs.

Finally, after—in true British spirit—several cups of tea, Lennon was released on his own recognizance pending a hearing the following morning. The entourage headed downtown, where they were booked into a \$50-a-day suite in the King Edward Sheraton Hotel.

Later in the evening, news leaked to the press and Toronto woke next morning to find John and Yoko's picture and story on the front page of the *Globe and Mail*. That morning, Lennon returned to the airport where in a thoroughly commendable and unexpected piece of sound judgment—Canadian immigration officials granted the most famous couple in the world a 10-day stay in the country. The hearing was adjourned to June 5.

The entourage returned to the hotel, where scores of teenagers had crammed into the corridors, and gave a five o'clock press conference. At 8 PM they once again drove to the airport, and boarded a 9:55 PM flight to Montreal, where the second bed-in got off to a heavily-heralded start.

Police were on duty along the corridors to hold back fans and to scrutinize the credentials of the 50-or-so press representatives who turned up to either gaze in wonder at the couple, or to dismiss the visit as more weird stuff from the weirdest family around.

Inside the crowded suite, John and Yoko sat peacefully holding hands, surrounded by pink and white carnations, record players, film equipment, empty glasses, and busy phones. Two books lay on a table—Vladimir Nabokov's *The Defence* and a personally autographed copy of Jacqueline Susann's latest voyeurist masterpiece, *The Love Machine*. (Earlier, Miss Susann had dropped by to pass on her good wishes and to cash in on the publicity of the Lennon visit.)

Yoko wore a white blouse and cream slacks with no shoes, and Lennon—feet tucked under his buttocks—had on a white T-shirt with a green stripe on the sleeves, cream trousers, white socks with red and blue stripes, a gold chain which suspended a crucifix on his chest, was also barefoot. A pair of white sneakers lay on the floor beneath his knees. Yoko's daughter, Kyoko, was ushered off by a friend prior to the press conference.

Both John and Yoko were at ease with the reporters and gave the im-

pression they'd been through similar grueling numbers several times before. Lennon fielded cynical questions about his peace-making efforts with adroitness and pungent wit. The twosome were obviously sincere in their campaign for peace and non-violence and rather bitter about the United States' refusal to admit Lennon.

"The whole effect of our bed-ins has made people talk about peace," said Lennon, toying with a white carnation and licking his thick moustache. "We're trying to interest young people into doing something for peace. But it must be done by non-violent means—otherwise there can only be chaos. We're saying to the young people . . . and they have always been the hippest ones . . . we're telling them to get the message across to the squares."

"A lot of young people have been ignoring the squares when they should be helping them. The whole scene has become too serious and too intellectual."

What about talking to the people who make the decisions, the power brokers? suggested a cynical reporter. Lennon laughed. "Shit, talk? Talk about what? It doesn't happen like that. In the U.S., the Government is too busy talking about how to keep me out. If I'm a

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WHY SOMETHING DIFFERENT?

Because: "The Velvet Underground are alive and well... and ever-changing. How do you define a group like this, who moved from 'Heroin' to 'Jesus' in two short years? It's not enough to say they have one of the broadest ranges of any group... they can write and play any kind of music they want to with equal brilliance." LESTER BANGS Rolling Stone

Because:



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Written, Arranged and Conducted by The Velvet Underground



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CORRESPONDENCE, LOVE LETTERS & ADVICE

SIRS:

If any of the musical people who have played San Quentin should happen to read this letter, to you I say thanks. It isn't much and maybe you don't realize it, but there are a hell of a lot of good heads up in the joint. It's amazing when you come right down to it what wonders good music can do for a soul in limbo.

And to Ralph Gleason, San Quentin can be good. Good, when the only person you care for and love is there, the architecture cannot be excelled, the vibes are the best to be found anywhere.

MRS. KATHY SIMMONS
 SAN DIEGO, CALIF.

SIRS:

The recent (May 17th issue) article praising the efforts of Scenic Sounds to present good rock to L.A. audiences prompts me to let you know about my experiences at the Pasadena Rose Palace a few weeks ago.

Some friends and I wanted to hear Led Zeppelin's L.A. performances since they were so incredible the previous weekend at Fillmore West. Finding them was something else. We spent three days talking to information operators, ticket agents, record clerks, Top 30 and underground disc jockeys before we found anyone who had even heard about the concert and the Pasadena Rose Palace, but to find out where it was and how to get tickets we actually had to go to the Pasadena Police Department Information Desk.

I won't even go through all the hassles we got from the citizenry of Pasadena, particularly in restaurants, but the Rose Palace turned out to be a concrete box with a "carpet" of simulated lawn, no listed phone number, no backstage or dressing rooms, a light show that consisted of a Betty Boop cartoon and a Hopalong Cassidy film clip, and a sound system that practically obliterated the performers.

The audience was primarily junior high school and high school lowerclassmen who screamed, shoved and jumped

on the stage. There were also some charming older freaks who threw girls in front onto the floor and kicked them to get their places. Two huge cats kicked me, shook cigarette sparks in my face and threatened to set my hair on fire if I didn't let them in front of me, which I would not do. Fortunately for me they were pushed farther downstage by the mob.

The Scenic Sounds people deliberately oversold both performances, leaving hundreds of people with \$3.50 and \$4.00 tickets outside. The inside was jammed beyond credible capacity, and if there was air conditioning at all it's certainly not adequate because many people were sick from heat, smoke, and lack of air. This is not promotion of entertainment, but calculated torture for profit.

It is to Led Zeppelin's credit that their performances were excellent, but I wouldn't want to go through a scene like the Pasadena Rose Palace again for anyone. Give it back to the parade floats. There has to be some place adequate for rock shows.

ANGELA ERRIGO
 SAN FRANCISCO

SIRS:

Re your article on my wife and I of May 17th. One point was a little unclear, namely Julie's musical talent, which she has exercised beautifully all her life. She didn't all of a sudden become musical when she met me. She has always been involved in creating music; composing it, singing it -- the only thing that happened when she met me was that she started playing the piano.

LARRY CORYELL
 NYACK, N.Y.

SIRS:

I have to protest WMCA's banning of the new Beatles single "The Ballad of John and Yoko." I fail to see what is distasteful in it. There is no profanity either explicitly or implicitly, and the name of the Deity is not used in any way that could possibly offend people.

After all, John is singing what he feels is happening to him. People have been making jokes for a couple of years that John is the next Messiah. It's not so funny any more when it begins to have too many shades of truth. John Lennon is much bigger than just the man. He is a symbol of the struggle in this world between the narrow-minded people and the open-minded; although I'm sure he prefers to think of himself as any other man fighting in the struggle, and not a symbol.

MARILYN SESKIN
 NEW YORK

SIRS:

I love you Richard Brautigan. Absolutely no doubt about it, read all about it, love you Richard Brautigan.

You are Gatsby with soul, Flaubert (Gustave, of course) but lightly, Thomas Pynchon's brilliant young soul (which longen folk to go on pilgrimages), California hills, a lot of fun (you make me laugh out loud), the fastest things I have ever read, the Gita Govinda when you want to be, real but (and) can you fly in the sky like one of those airplanes which leave skywriting behind them for us on the ground. Forgot to mention your grandfather Dylan Thomas.

By now I realize that I can't describe you any more than I could describe myself.

Anyway, I love you Richard Brautigan. I hope you have a fantastic old lady and ten blond children. I have a beautiful orange haired old man. He would make you laugh to see him, as you make me laugh. Sometimes he laughs at me, looking at me lying in his arms.

My old man hasn't read anything from you except what I've shoved under his nose whenever you got me crazy . . .

BEVERLY LANGER
 BROOKLYN

SIRS:

I as an adult am not completely "turned on," as you say, to the young

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Random Notes

Record producer and music publisher Snuff Garrett walked into his Hollywood office recently to find three girls waiting for him to listen to their demo record. The girls call themselves the Groupies and claim they recorded their song in the buff. Title: "I Am Curious (Bubble Gum)."

Mick Jagger plays the role of a swash-buckling, 19th Century Australian bandit/folk hero in his next movie, scheduled to begin shooting in July.

The movie will be Jagger's second major dramatic film, following the still-unreleased *Performance*. His old lady, Marianne Faithfull, will co-star. In the new one, he enacts the life and good times of a bush-ranger named Ned Kelly, born in 1854 as the eldest son of a convict.

Kelly blazed through ten years of terrorizing through Australian townships after one of his brothers was jailed for horse-stealing. Bandit Ned was eventually stopped and hanged. Still, he lives—as do such heroes as Paul Bunyan, Billy the Kid, and Robin Hood—in the hearts of all Aussies who like the good, the bad, and the ugly all mixed together.

A perfect role for Mick Jagger.

It's amazing, the ways devised to combat the menace of rock and roll. At Earl Warren Junior High School in Solana Beach, Calif., they're using a decibel meter. Dr. Rodney E. Phillips, school principle, says he writes it into the contracts with bands playing at school dances they must not play or sing above the 100-decibel level. What this means is amplifiers may not be turned up above 2.

"I used to go home from school with my ears ringing and severe headaches," the principal said. "When my wife said something to me, I couldn't understand her." During the final months of the school year, though, Dr. Phillips attended the dances—decibel counter in hand—to see that the new contracts were enforced. He borrowed the meter from Non-Linear Systems, Inc., of nearby Del Mar.

Ah, but there's some hope. The last dance (song) of the evening, the band can turn everything up to 10. It is then, Dr. Phillips says, he can feel the building shake.

PXes on US Armed Forces bases in Europe report that for the first time soul music is more in demand than C&W. Three years ago they were the same—each about 20% of the market. Now R&B and soul account for 25%, C&W 15%. But Herb Alpert still outsells the Beatles.

So now it turns out that "Parsley, Sage, Rosemary and Thyme" was a dope song.

According to a newly-settled inmate at the county jail in San Rafael, California, parsley can give a more powerful high on marijuana. The garden herb, says Olas Hendrickson, is the basic ingredient in a new psychedelic substance called "Angels' Dust." A cop found the dust—along with the more traditional LSD, cocaine, hash, and cannabis—in the 25-year-old Hendrickson's car in Fairfax and busted him for unlawful transportation of narcotics. The "Angel's Dust" was included by police in its list of narcotics.

The dust, Hendrickson told police, is made up of chemically-treated parsley; he declined to describe the exact manufacturing process. He did say, however, that "one joint of Angels' Dust will put a man as high as a lid of marijuana. It's going to bring heaven to earth. It's a brand new place to go . . . it's holy smoke." We'll believe it when we smoke it.

Wanna hear the plot of *The Hooked Generation*, soon in your local drive-in? Well, three dope-peddlers (Dum-Dum, Daisy, and Acid, who is a junkie) meet their Castro Cuba heroin connections off the Florida coast, but after scoring, for some reason they slaughter the fidelistas and set their boat afire. A couple on a Coast Guard cutter spot them throwing packages overboard (to float ashore, right past Customs), so the

Coast Guard boards the pushers' boat, where they see somebody fixing into a bulging vein and get killed. The gruesome three next kidnap the couple on the CG boat and rape the girl. Then the gang tries to sell their snack to a black hippie pusher who finks on them, escape scene into the Everglades where they rape an Indian girl and drown her. One of them catches his just desserts by a bullet, one by snakebite and one by a hypodermic in the neck. In one scene, Acid, the junkie, rejects a hit of cocaine, saying, "No, thanks, I'm no fiend." Brought to you courtesy of your local drive-in, where there are no NO SMOKING signs.

We are in receipt of a notice from England, bearing the information that 1969 is the 50th anniversary of "white" jazz in Great Britain. It figured.

In Amsterdam, British pop singer Peter Sarstedt had his guest segment on the TV show *Time, Love, Hope and Life* snipped by Netherlands TV officials.

Dutch television, often considered the most liberal in the world, was apparently not quite ready for a scene showing Sarstedt stepping over a floor full of love-making couples while singing his hit, "Where Do You Go To (My Lovey)?"

Sarstedt claims the nude scenes were done "very tastefully. I'd expect this in England or the US, but I was under the impression that this was a progressive medium in The Netherlands." Wrong again.

Following four years of retirement, Chubby Checker is back on the road again. At a recent gig at The Arthur in D.C. he had the beautiful people not only twistin' in the aisles, but stompin', shoutin', hootin' and howlin'. Backed by a Boston group, the Indigos, Chubby displayed a mature moving style in "California Dreaming." Someone flashed a V-sign and suddenly everyone was Together. Everyone—like spade chicks in furs, uptight bureaucrats, long-haired blondes in see-thru bellbottoms, the suburban set in town for a night out, and the Coasters, in the audience on a rare night off.

Always nice to hear about new, hip, readable newspapers. And there is such a paper now, a new weekly coming out of Toronto. It's called *Tribal Village* and it not only covers the rock scene (concert reports and a lot of record reviews) but offers politics, art news, handy householding features (how to bake organic whole wheat bread; how to make your garden grow), and poetry. Later, as the Village's own garden grows, there'll be coverage of jazz, theatre, and even antiques. For a three-month taste, send \$2.50 to the TV, Box 29, Postal Station J, Toronto, Ontario. A full year costs \$7.

Coleman Hawkins was the first master of the tenor saxophone in jazz, and he could—and did—play with every kind of jazz group, from Chicago-style Dixieland to avant garde free-form. For forty years, Coleman Hawkins was a standard unto himself, and though many tried—in sessions that ran all through the night and the next day—no one ever really cut him. He died of pneumonia at 64 in New York on May 19th.

A trio of items from the Everly Brothers: (1) Don, Phil, and father Ike will make an appearance at the Newport Folk Festival this July. (2) The elder Everly, a well-known traditional country music guitarist, will soon have his own album on Warner Bros.-Seven Arts. (3) An upcoming Everly Brothers single, "The Fugitive," was written for the duo by Bob Dylan, who caught their act recently at the Bitter End in New York City.

The Sundowners do a song called "The Plaster Casters" on their new album. It's an instrumental.

Say Goodnight, dick.



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LOVE LETTERS AND ADVICE

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generation, but that doesn't mean I can't recognize good literature and plain outright filth. *ROLLING STONE* is just plain filth. I have a teenage son and I was shocked when I looked through a *ROLLING STONE* that I found down in the basement. The vocabulary was outright vulgar and the contents of the paper were nothing but garbage. The writers at your smuthouse made fun of decency rallies—one of the only good things this younger generation has started.

All your musicians ever do is pull down their pants in public and concentrate on how loud their amplifiers are, and your writers don't knock this down and expose these so called concerts as schemes to rob money from stupid teenagers. All this younger generation is doing is spending their parents' hard earned money on noisy records by groups with stupid names like Led Zeppelin, Butterfield, and the Beatles (I got those names from my son's record collection—if it can be called one).

I will make sure my son never gets that piece of dirt of yours again and I have informed his friends' parents of the smut their children are reading. Maybe this won't hurt your sales but if we could get all parents to do this I'd like to see how long you could peddle your paper.

FRANCIS X. RIENZO
JAMAICA, N.Y.

SIRS:

Let me say up front that I don't give a fuck about decency as practiced by our society, but on May 18 I attended a "Rally for Morality and Youth" here in the "action center of Florida." Be warned, Orlando is Nixon County, and Florida is where Jim Morrison took it out for all to see. Just to give you an idea of what we're up against here, the local censor board declared the film *Romeo and Juliet* unfit for those under eighteen. A recent peace rally attracted about a hundred people.

So, the local Birchers, puritans, and professional Christians treated the decent people to an afternoon consisting of unenthusiastic bands, a pathetic "Sing Out Florida" group, and a parade of speakers most notable for stringing together preachy clichés and inducing sleep

in the first fifty rows of the audience. The five thousand who showed up—ten thousand had been predicted—were mostly inattentive and bored. Fuzz was plentiful. Blacks were noticeably absent.

Proclaimed a success by its sponsors and the local right wing press, the rally accomplished nothing except to confirm what the young already know: something is happening; the decent people just don't know what it is.

BENNY F. HERMAN
ORLANDO, FLA.

SIRS:

In his most perceptive review of the Velvet Underground's new album, Lester Bangs was kind enough to point out the "metaphysical quest implied in the words I'm searching for my mainline" in the old Velvet Underground's "Sister Sue."

We less perceptive readers would appreciate a clarification of the "deeper" meaning in the preceding line: "She's just a-suckin' on my ding dong."

Let us not make silk purses. . . .
BONNIE COPELAND
PITTSBURGH

SIRS:

Please return the pictures of the albums to the record review section. They were left out of Issue 34, but they are the snazziest part of your magazine. As I am always broke, I like to cut the little mothers out and pretend like they're real albums. I paste them on my wall and I consequently develop grand illusions of purchasing power, an illusion so necessary to the care and maintenance of Americans everywhere.

Sometimes I and my friend Harold spin them on our fingers and put needles to them. What sounds! Sometimes we gouge out our eyes. When we get really zonked we go to this restaurant where they have pictures in the menu of the food they're reviewing, and cut them out and pretend we're eating. But all seriousness aside, please put the pictures back and assuage my fears arising from the Time article.

KAO BENEDICK
CHAPEL HILL, N.C.

Presenting



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on Atlantic Records



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joke, as they say, and not important, why don't they just let me in?" he added, bitterly.

Admitting that there may be better ways of promoting peace than lying in bed for seven days, Yoko—looking supremely thin and happy—said: "We worked for three months thinking out the most functional approach to boosting peace before we got married and spent our honeymoon talking to the press in bed in Amsterdam. For us, it was the only way. We can't go out in Trafalgar Square [the site of many peace demonstrations in London] and join in because it would create a riot. We can't lead a parade or a march because of all the autograph hunters.

"We had to find our own way of doing it, and for now, bed-ins seem to be the most logical way. We think the bed-in can be effective."

"Yeah," said John, "if we were to issue a statement or something to the press, only a part of it would ever get in. But this way everybody will know and understand what we want to get across."

Students at Toronto's progressive Rochdale College immediately staged a sympathy bed-in. One student said: "We'd be willing to go even further with a nude-in. We would not only strip our bodies, we would strip our souls."

Our arrival in Toronto, Lennon had said that he would like to meet Canada's Prime Minister Trudeau and to hand him an acorn ("an acorn is a seed, and seeds are symbolic of life"). Later, Trudeau said, "I don't know about acorns but if he's around I'd like to meet him. He's a good poet."

Lennon said that he and his family were prepared to go to Ottawa—"or anywhere for that matter"—to meet Trudeau. He also invited the Prime Minister to join him in the Montreal bed-in, and unprecedented invitation (even for Trudeau) on which the country's leader has still not made a decision.

In Montreal, the Lenons planned to meet anyone from the press—to discuss peace—from 10 AM to 10 PM daily for seven days. "The press is like a postbox," John said, "and they can reach the people—all the people—who are wandering around the streets." Added Derek Taylor: "We can do so much for peace with a little help from our friends."

"People take war for granted," observed Yoko, "they are conditioned to accept it. So you've got to change their thinking. Like TV soap commercials, you have to keep pounding away with the message all the time. It's a full-scale campaign."

"We're all responsible for war," said Lennon, "We all must do something, no matter what—by growing our hair long, standing on one leg, talking to the press, having bed-ins—to change the attitudes. The people must be made aware that it's up to them."

"Bed-ins are something that everybody can do and they're so simple. We're willing to be the world's clowns to make people realize it." A reporter suggested that it was easy for the Lenons to do it, when they have so much money and so much spare time. "Bullshit," retorted John. "This is our holiday. All the Beatles are on holiday at the moment. In Amsterdam we chose to give our honeymoon to the peace cause, now we're giving our holidays. It doesn't cost anything, so anybody can do it. Give your holidays to peace—just lie in bed for a week. It will all help."

Then, while Derek Taylor commanded the attention of the offensive reporter with a strong line of philosophical hype, Yoko said: "Eventually we hope to have had more honeymoons than anyone in the world, maybe even 150."

Lennon is also hoping to stage a bed-in in Russia. He grinned and quipped, "I've heard it's easier to get into there than into the United States."

Lennon plans, once he has obtained a U.S. visa, to hold bed-ins in New York and Washington, D.C. There are no plans for the West Coast.

The twosome also plan bed-ins in Germany, Ireland and Toyko. London is out. "I'd have to take me prick out to get the attention of the English press. Now we do it outside and the English press come to see it. We need the press very much to get our message across, so we have to go along with all sorts of bullshit from reporters. We answer the same questions over and over. Let me tell you that the Amsterdam gig wasn't the best way I know of having a honeymoon."



People's Park imbroglio—"when I first go the news it stunned me, absolutely stunned me"—and told KPFA that people around the world were on the side of People's Park.

"But you can't do it with violent means. That won't accomplish anything. Keep it peaceful. Violence is what has kept mankind from getting together for centuries."

[AN INTERVIEW]

Before the peace troupe left for Montreal, Ritchie Yorke managed to get an exclusive private interview with John. Yorke describes the setting, as Lennon sat back in the cab and heaved a sigh of relief:

It was a well earned and long anticipated sigh. Moments before he had been engulfed by a swarm of half-crazed teenagers who had shoved past police and descended on him.

It was meant to be a top-secret exit from the hotel with the Lennon family heading to Toronto airport where they planned to fly to Montreal to start a seven-day bed in. We'd left several phones angrily demanding attention, carnations littered over beds and rugs, unopened letters and telegrams, fans screaming from behind burly policemen along the hotel corridors.

Down some sort of fire escape we had fled, any moment expecting to be deluged by fans. It didn't happen until we were almost to the car, waiting, motor running, in a quiet back-of-the-building tradesmen entrance.

Running out of elevator—Lennon's two-man film crew letting the film race through the camera—they were suddenly on us. Lennon was seized in a dozen different places. He groaned. Yoko Ono cried out "Quickly John, this way." Somehow the police regained control, we were shoved into the cab, the garage door opened slowly, too slowly, and they were on us again . . . kids climbing on the hood and the trunk, even the roof. Derek Taylor, the Beatles' publicity man, shouted to close the windows, lock the door. It had already been done. The fans either jumped or fell off as we gathered speed.

Lennon looked tired, a quiet figure sinking back into the rear seat, next to Yoko's five-year-old daughter, Kyoko. Yoko was nonchalant. Lennon, all in white, sighed again and said: "I think Ringo was right about not touring." And later . . . "The Beatles are a democratic group of middle-aged teenagers. We just don't happen to agree on doing concerts. I've wanted to do some for a while, but I'm not sure anymore."

It was an uneventful trip to the airport, a welcome respite from the maddening crowds. We arrived un-announced, but in less than 60 seconds a crowd had gathered; shoving, shouting, pushing, poking. While Taylor took care of the tickets, John and Yoko, John holding on to Kyoko, one of the Lennon cameramen and myself were ushered into a small room, vacant but for three chairs, a desk and a plastic rubber plant.

Air Canada stewardesses locked the door, but later kept coming in for autographs. A crowd of airport staff gathered around outside the door, while we sat back, sipped on orange juice, and rapped.

John, tired of the same old questions doubting the honest intentions of his campaign for peace, seemed pleased to talk of other topics. Yoko occasionally joined in and John constantly held her hand, for more than an hour, while the plane that was to take them to Montreal was prepared and we made yet another fevered, secretive escape through a maze

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Kyoko peeking out of the suite

BARBIE DAVIS



I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier.

Eli Radish



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of tunnels.

John, did you anticipate the controversy resulting from the cover of your *Two Virgins* album (which pictured John and Yoko naked on the front of the jacket), were you upset by it, and how do you feel about the whole thing in retrospect?

Yeah, well I expected some noise about it. [I didn't, cut in Yoko.] But I didn't expect as much as we got. I'm sure Yoko didn't expect it. I'd always wanted to produce Yoko, before we were lovers.

It all started with the producing kick the Beatles got into. Paul was producing Mary Hopkins, George had Jackie Lomax so I decided to produce a record with Yoko. I was in India meditating on the Yoko album and how to present it. [He laughed]. One day I just suddenly thought the best way was to have Yoko naked on the cover. I wrote and told her and I got some static at the other end. She wasn't too keen.

Finally I had her persuaded, I came back to England and by natural turn of events, I wound up being naked in the picture too. It was all a bit strange. When we were taking the picture, I got a funny feeling when I looked down at me cock. Hello, I thought, we're on.

When I got the pictures back, I was mildly shocked. You know, I was only mildly shocked, but I thought that if I'm surprised by it, what will others think? Then I looked again and I thought it was great having the *Financial Times* on the floor and everything.

I'm pleased we did it. For all reasons, I'm glad about it. I wanted people to be shocked. It was all worth it just for the howl that went up. It really blew their minds like right-wing Fascists.

I got long lectures from Paul about it at first. Is there any need for this, he said. What are you doing, said George. It took me five months to persuade them that it was right. That's why it took so long coming out.

Now I'm planning to resell it. I'm going to promote it with a line saying "It's still just a record despite all the crap that went on." I wish more people had sat down and listened to it.

But the thing cleared the air a bit. That's why I'm glad. Anything that's headed towards the truth, the people try to trip it up. Their first reaction is to kill it, stop it from escaping. It is really showing them a mirror, showing them they're all ugly. But the album wasn't ugly, it was only a point of view.

What do you think of Jim Morrison's recent alleged masturbation incident in Florida?

I don't think anything of it really. I suppose the show wasn't going too well, so Jim decided to pull out his prick and liven it up a bit. If he likes wanking, that's OK. I don't think he actually wanked off though; even if he did, I wish he'd done the whole thing and fucked some bird up there. Do the whole scene.

Actually, I've got a wanking play opening tonight on Broadway. Yes, four guys are wanking tonight in New York. It's the Kenneth Tynan play (*OH! Calcutta!*). They asked us to write a smutty bit for them. I don't know whether they'll do it like it was when I wrote it. Ah, it all fucks up their little minds, doesn't it?

A couple of years ago you made a highly controversial statement about the Beatles' popularity as compared with Jesus Christ. Right now, do you think the image of bad boys which the press has given the group, especially yourself, has reduced your popularity? Do you still think the same way?

I think I said that the Beatles have more influence on young people than Jesus Christ. Yes, I still think it. Kids are influenced more by us than Jesus.

Christ, some ministers even stood up and agreed with it. It was another piece of truth that the Fascist Christians picked on. I'm all for Christ, I'm very big on Christ. I've always fancied him. He was right.

As he said, in his book. You'll get knocked if you follow my ways. He was so right about that. We got knocked. But I'm all for him. I'm always saying his name, I use it in songs [the new Beatles single, "The Ballad of John and Yoko," includes several less-than-reverent mentions of Christ], and I talk about him.

Recent reports from London claim that you are going broke, and you'll soon have to resort to touring to get some money. Is this true?

I did lose a lot of money in Apple. I mean, the company was becoming a joke. We were losing our own money. Apple consists of 80 per cent of Beatles royalties. We had some wrong people in there. Some of the people just came into the office, and called up Los Angeles and made reservations.

But we've got some good people now. We had to. It got so bad that Paul and George and I couldn't even be bothered going into the office. We made a lot of mistakes with it. We promised to help everybody but it couldn't be done. We gave away a fortune but it was useless. We attracted shit-kickers from all over the world.

In the end, I threatened to pull my money out. Then we hired Allan Klein to come in and take over, and he came followed by a black cloud. They said he was tough and ruthless, but we found he's a good guy. So's David Platz, who's looking after publishing and recording. It's all much better now.

What is happening with Beatles records?

We've finished the next album. It was like a rehearsal. But we decided to put the rehearsal out. Only one track almost finished and that was "Get Back." The others are in various stages of completion.

One day we just decided to stop right then or we'd be on it for another four months. So we stopped. It will be called *Get Back, Don't Let Me Down and 12 Others*. Remember the cover on the "Please Please Me" album. Well, we went back to the same photographic studioe and had our pictures taken in the same positions, except that we look as we do now. It looks great.

So we've got that album finished, and another one half done. Oh, and we have a new single, "The Ballad of John and Yoko," and "Old Brown Shoe," one of George's songs.

Have you planned any more records with Yoko?

[The wedding album, suggested Yoko.] OK, let's give the wedding album a plug. It will be presented like a book, and the record will be all about love and peace. There's some heavy stuff—halfbeats recorded with terrific machinery. There'll also be some bits and pieces from our press conference in Amsterdam.

Your film crew has been shooting practically all day, and are even filming our present interview. What do you intend to do with all this celluloid?

Well, we have seven films which we're producing. We're looking for a distributor now. If you know any distributors, tell 'em to get in touch with us. We also have two books, one which was written by me, and the other by Yoko and me. Our old publisher has turned them down, but I think we'll find another publisher.

We don't compromise, and we therefore get turned down by distributors. No one realizes that, but I'm always getting turned down. People send me in songs, books, films, records, all sorts of things they want to get out. But I can't even get my own stuff out, so I can't help them. People think we've got it all sewn up, but we haven't. Look at all the things I'm having trouble getting out.

How long have you known each other?

Two years this time around.

What would you describe as the most satisfying thing that happened to you since the Beatles started?

Meeting Yoko.

You've spent a considerable amount of time trying to obtain entry into the United States. Aren't you afraid of the political climate there, and once you have obtained entry, how long do you think it will take before your campaign can have any effect?

Yes, we're really scared to go to the U.S. because people have become so violent, even our sort of people. Violence begets violence. We want to avoid it. But once we do get into the States, and can do our bed-ins in Washington and New York, I think we'll start to have some effect. I think it will take five to ten years to change things. Yoko thinks five, I'm for ten. But we can't do it alone, we must have everybody's help.

What is the record which knocks you out the most at the moment?

"Oh Happy Day." It's the biggest mind-blower I've heard since that Procol Harum thing, "A Whiter Shade of Pale." I have lots of mind-blowers but "Oh Happy Day" is the biggest one.

What do you think of *Blood, Sweat & Tears*?

OK, but I'm not mad on them. I don't go for perfect music. The group is competent and the album is well done, but it's not for me. I like music to be more freer, less restricted. Several people told me about the group and I got the album but it didn't do much for me. It's just too competent.

What about Cream?

Yeah, Cream I dug, but it did get a bit samey after a while. Three stars banging hell out of solo numbers. It bored me in the end. Those three excellent musicians playing solo together. I like Eric and Ginger but I got bored with Cream in the end.

What did you think of the latest Beatles' album in retrospect?

I haven't heard it for two months. I'm going to try and listen to it in Montreal. You see, some kids came up to me today and told me what they were getting off the album. There were things I didn't know about. So I'm going to get back to it.

From your peace campaign, can one assume that you are an anti-nationalist?

Yes, I guess I'm a bit of an anti-nationalist. But I fancy myself as a bit of an Irishman, and I'm always telling Yoko about some of the battles that Britain won.

When we arrived here in Toronto, we told a cab driver that we were thinking of going to Montreal, and he said "Those fucking foreigners. Why do you want to go there?" You see, people are stupid like that. What could be better than a combination of the English and French cultures in Canada? It would be a unique and a wonderful mixture.

I think anti-nationalism will have to come if we want peace. There's no room for this fucking-foreigners stuff.

Actually, you know, Yoko and I are foreigners. We're always kidding each other about that. When we're in Japan, Yoko's family think I'm a foreigner, and when we're in London, Yoko's the foreigner. I guess in Montreal we'll both be foreigners. [Yoko laughed, and clutched John's other hand.]

What do you think were the real reasons why you have had difficulty obtaining a visa for the United States?

Well, there's obviously more reason than a fucking technicality of possession. I think I'll get it, though. They've already offered me a deal. They inferred that if I did a tape for them—an anti-narcotics tape with Senator McGowen or someone—and copped out, my case would be re-considered. I haven't told many people that since I've been here, but it's true and that's what we're up against.

Moby: the Grape Turns Sour

BY BEN FONG-TORRES

SAN FRANCISCO—Moby Grape came on, in mid-1967, with a garish, lavish kickoff party at the Avalon Ballroom; the release by Columbia of five singles all at once; an album, and, to top it all off, a well-timed dope bust.

They also came on with solid rock and roll and an energetic stage style—due mostly to rhythm guitarist Skip Spence. But the package seemed just a little too slick.

So only one of the singles ("Omaha") penetrated the charts, and profits from the album were soaked up by costs for the extravagant promotion, leaving each Grape with royalties of something like \$180. And their next year together was highlighted by the largely unnoticed release of a two-LP set featuring Mike Bloomfield, Al Kooper, and Arthur Godfrey as guest artists, and a million-dollar lawsuit over ownership of the name Moby Grape.

It is no surprise, then, that the Moby Grape have broken up.

Spence was the first to leave. He dropped out last July following what drummer Don Stevenson called a "psychological blowup" (known in the trade as a freak-out). Long recovered, he is now in San Jose working up material for a solo LP on Columbia.

This February, Bob Mosley packed up his bass and split; then Stevenson and guitarist Jerry Miller began working as sidemen for another band, and, finally, lead guitarist Peter Lewis took off for Nashville to do a solo LP of his own.

For awhile, despite the past rifts and the legal hang-up with their ex-manager



Spence of the Grape: the first to skip

Matthew Katz over the name, it looked like Moby Grape was ready to put together a succession of right moves toward a revival of sorts.

They had a new LP out this spring, this one featuring straight, easy-rolling, out-and-out rock and roll, minus the 78-rpm gimmick, crash sound effects, chipmunk voices, and free posters. And the group recently completed a successful tour of Europe, including two weeks of concerts and a BBC appearance in London.

They had more or less re-settled in Boulder Creek, a rustic town of tree-hidden houses in the Santa Cruz mountains, an hour from San Francisco. There, living in places no more than a mile away from each other, the Grape rehearsed on the porch of Stevenson's house.

The band's split-up leaves their court squabble in the air. That case began with the group's breakaway early last year from Katz, a veteran showman, literary and booking agent, and band manager whose dealings with Jefferson Airplane and It's a Beautiful Day also ended up in lawsuits.

When the Grape split from Katz, he formed another band and gave them the name Moby Grape. He sent the reconstituted Grapes—a collection of Seattle musicians—and sent them out on tour under his banner, "The San Francisco Sound."

He also filed a \$1 million lawsuit against the original Grape, claiming exclusive ownership of the name. The Moby Grape did sign a management contract with Katz in which it was stated that Katz had sole rights to the name. In addition, according to Katz' attorney, the clause was included in the Grape's contract with Columbia Records.

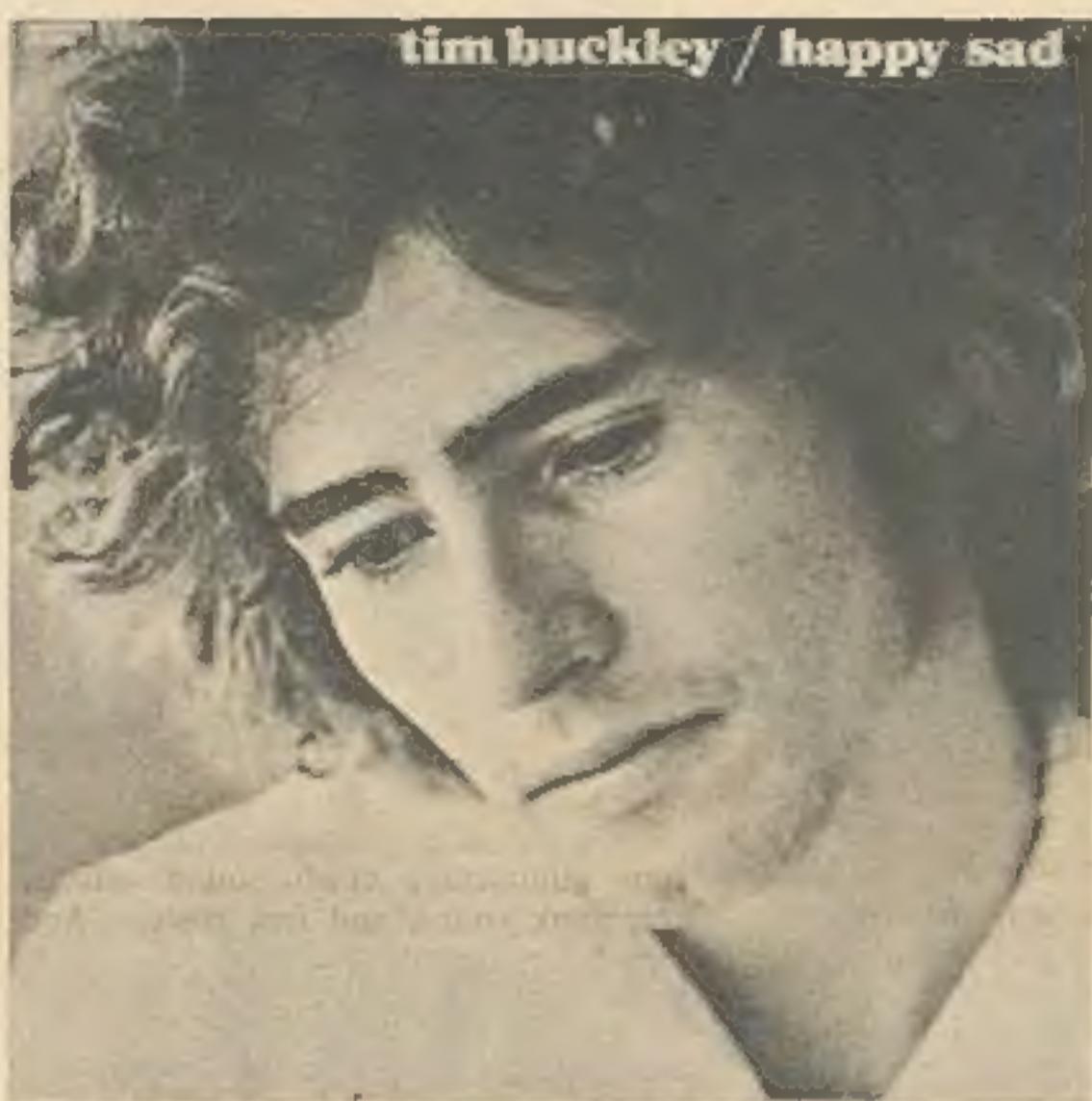
The Grape then filed a countersuit charging Katz with illegal use of their name. The band claimed, Stevenson said, that Katz's contract with them was invalid; that he was acting as manager without proper credentials.

The case, filed by Katz in San Francisco Superior Court, was sent to Superior Court in Los Angeles, where the \$1 million damage claim was thrown out. Now, with Katz seeking only an injunction, the issue moves back to San Francisco for a hearing before a labor commissioner.

A hearing date has not yet been set. But now, with the group's breakup, it is debatable whether or not the ill-starred name (which was, at best, a steal from that rage of 1964, elephant jokes) is still worth fighting over.

The musicians just may decide to let Katz have his Grape and eat it.

Commentary.



Tim Buckley has something to say about rock: "There's a lot more to music than sex. I play heart music." About his songs: "My new songs aren't dazzling; it's not 2 minutes and 50 seconds of rock'em, sock'em...I guess it's pretty demanding." About lyrics: "If people want poems they should read Dylan Thomas." About his music: "Mess up my body, man, but don't mess up my music." About his direction: "There's going to be a change." Tim Buckley says it all as he turns a corner in a new album on Elektra. His third.



records

HAPPY/SAD

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ALSO ON ALL TAPE CONFIGURATIONS BY AMPEX

People's Park Peace Talks

BERKELEY, CALIF.—At People's Park, the ball is still in the air. The Berkeley City Council has decided to ask the University to save the eastern half of People's Park from becoming a soccer field, and the ball is bouncing toward the laps of the Board of Regents.

The National Guard, Berkeley Police and Alameda Sheriff's Department used a gas and shotgun campaign on May 15th to defend a brand-new fence around the park. Berkeley street people had built on a vacant lot owned by the University. It remained tense for the next week. On the 22nd, police arrested 482 people in a peaceful march on Shattuck Avenue, among them a number of uninvolved shoppers.

But public reaction made itself felt. Petitions on the park, pro and con, were circulated in the park neighborhood. Doctors registered their distress over the use of Vietnam-style CN teargas, and one charged that a canister marked "U.S. 6 Blister Gas" had been found on Sproul Plaza.

Outcry concerning reports of degrading treatment and mild torture (forcing a man to lean against a post on his nose while the post is struck, causing disorientation and nosebleed) led to a promise of investigation from Governor Reagan, and approval by a Superior Court judge for an investigation by a team of lawyers, as has been done in integration cases in the South, the first such investigation in California.

Alameda County Sheriff Frank Madigan racked up an impressive double-speak record in the two weeks following the Thursday war. The night of the shootings he announced that birdshot (nothing larger) had been used by some deputies "to protect our officers who were being surrounded." A week later he was still claiming only birdshot had been used, although by then he had claimed both No. 8 and No. 9 shot as the "only" ammunition fired. By this time two things had happened: James Rector had died of double-ought buckshot wounds. (Double-ought buckshot is about fifty times heavier than No. 8 or No. 9).

And the San Francisco Chronicle had published a photo (which also appeared in ROLLING STONE) of a police officer aiming a shotgun at a man who was far from "surrounding" any officers, inasmuch as he was running the other way. Madigan's response to the photo was to call a press conference to denounce it as "doctored."

Finally, at the time of the proposed Memorial Day march, Madigan was announcing that shotguns might be used again as two weeks before and that his men had been issued both birdshot and buckshot. "Double-O is standard load for police work," he said.

Parks were being improvised all over Berkeley, notably on property of the East Bay monorail/subway system under construction. An anonymous cabal propagated leaflets in the style of US propaganda as used in Vietnam: "Student!! Street Persons!! This pass will give you safe conduct through our lines you will receive, good treatment! Medicin! Plenty of 'pot' and 'marijuana'! Also, top hit parades psychedelic music! Give up, buddy—Your Pals."

On May 27th, a Green Power Rally was held with the intention of watering the turf inside the fenced-in park. It was a party by comparison with some of the other demonstrations. The tensest moment came when three chicks took off their blouses and ran topless toward the fence; the National Guardsmen behind it reacted by putting on their gas masks.

The night before a major march scheduled for Memorial Day was full of action. Even John Lennon got into it, over the phone to KSAN: "Scoop: 'How do you propose we get our park back?' John: 'If Gandhi can get rid of the fascist British, you can get your park back. All the places that have revolution through violence, all they got was another establishment doing exactly the same as the other side. What we've got to do is change their heads.'"

The big action was at the Berkeley City Council, where a debate extending past midnight was televised statewide on NET. In the wake of statements from Governor Reagan and Sheriff Madigan that "whatever force is necessary" would



Ducks yus yus—on with your gasmasks, men!

be on hand, a series of speakers representing every conceivable point of view addressed the Council. Former New York City Park Commissioner Thomas Hoving praised the park project in the highest possible terms. Mothers, students, and used-car salesmen expressed their feelings. U.C. Chancellor Heyns presented a proposal for partitioning the lot into playing fields and a park (earlier proposals from his office had also given space for a park, each successive plan giving it more space). A similar proposal made two days earlier had been turned down by one vote, but this one, under the pressure of the impending march, was passed. (The swing vote was that of a member named Swingle.)

The Memorial Day march was peaceful, contrary to most expectations, though not quiet—the march led naturally to a memorable street party with plenty of rock and roll and such.

Rock and roll bands came through with benefits organized to help arrange bail for those arrested in the various busting sessions. Bill Graham organized one at Winterland with Jefferson Airplane, the Grateful Dead, Creedence Clearwater and Elvin Bishop. Others featured Country Joe MacDonald; various satirical troupes such as the Pitschel Players; and a large roster of poets.

As it stands now, the Guard still occupies the park, the fence is still up, and the ball is in the Regents' laps. Watch this space.

Fillmore to Tell All Its Secrets

SAN FRANCISCO—For reasons that are at once altruistic and self-centered, Bill Graham's Fillmore Corporation is presenting a series of free seminars on the recording business.

The series of classes will include lectures and workshops in the theory and practice of recording; studio production technique; record business operation and structure; basic electronic physics and electrical engineering; and actual practice in the production and engineering of recording sessions.

And if all that sounds a little too much, classes will be divided between advanced and basic.

Teachers will be David Rubinson (ex-Columbia producer now a vice president at Fillmore) and a core staff including an attorney, two engineers, and another producer. They'll be backed by guest lecturers from radio stations, sound studios, and record distribution houses. Besides the two-hour classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays, a three-hour workshop will be conducted each Saturday at Pacific Recorders in San Mateo, a suburb down the San Francisco peninsula.

The seminars begin on June 28th, and anyone interested can get an application by writing the Fillmore Corporation at 1548 Market Street, San Francisco 94103.

Rubinson, who has produced the Chambers Brothers, Moby Grape, Taj Mahal, and Mongo Santamaria, among others, said the seminars are being offered to (1) "turn out professionals for

people who have no professional goals but are naive musically and explain to them what everything's about."

"In San Francisco," he said, "the level of ignorance in terms of business is obvious. Look at all the artists and companies around here, and consider how none of them are solvent, commensurate to their success. Think of all the lawsuits going around because of how little financial planning was done. A group that sells five hundred, six hundred thousand LPs goes back to pinching hay."

"Almost every rock and roll group gets fucked in some way."

But business, Rubinson says, won't preclude art. "I'm not trying to turn creative people into businessmen and lawyers," he said, "but to turn them into truly creative people, to teach artists to have command of their own sound, and to make them self-sufficient."

But, of course, there is a Fillmore string attached—or, at least, dangling nearby. Rubinson would like to build up a stable of producing/engineering talent for his new corporation.

Interested people should get applications back to Rubinson by June 24th.

Mexican President Inks for the Doors

LOS ANGELES—The Doors have been forced to reschedule their concert in Mexico City's leading bull ring—thanks to the city's mayor who forgot to sign an entertainment permit before leaving for a state visit to the U.S.S.R.

The concert originally was to have been the first public performance for the band since its "obscene" concert in Miami in March and had been set for late May. Now the Doors will go into the 48,000-seat Plaza Monumental June 28th. Before that time they will have appeared in three cities in the Midwest.

The new date was set when the permit was signed by Mexico's president, Gustavo Diaz Ordóñez. The Doors will be introduced at the concert by Mexico's leading entertainment personality, Caniflas.

Prices at the concert have been set at a minimum—from 40 cents to a dollar—and a program of the evening's songs is being published for the event with the lyrics translated into Spanish.

The Doors also will appear in one of the capital city's leading night clubs in a benefit for the International Red Cross. For this concert, tickets are being priced at \$25 apiece.

The next month, the Doors record their first live albums. This has been set to coincide with the quartet's appearance at the Aquarius Theater here, one of Elektra's series of concerts designed to showcase all the label's acts.

This engagement is scheduled for July 21st, the same week the Doors' fourth LP, *The Soft Parade*, is released. *The Soft Parade* includes recent Doors hits, "Touch Me" and "Wishful Sinful," and is the first of the group's LPs utilizing orchestration.

Meanwhile, still nothing new to report on the Miami nonsense. It's still sloganizing us way through early legal stages.

Mick Busted For 'A Substance'

LONDON—Police arrived at Cheyne Walk, home of Rolling Stones lead singer Mick Jagger, on Wednesday evening, May 28th, entered, had a look around, and "took some substances for analysis" with them when they left.

They neither said what they suspected those substances might be, nor has any definitive analysis been announced. But Mick and Marianne Faithfull, his lady companion, were taken to a nearby police station, booked and released, an hour later, on \$120 bail each.

Word had spread by the time they got home again, and a crowd of reporters was waiting. Mick waved and told them, "I'm going back to work now to make a record."

Jagger and Miss Faithfull appeared in court the next day. Their trial was fixed for June 23rd.

All other information concerning the bust was *sub judice* (may not, under British law, be made public, for fear of influencing justice).

Jagger was previously busted, in mid-1967, for possession of four pep pills without prescription; a three-month sentence was lifted by British justices later that year. Keith Richard and Brian Jones have also had their share of run-ins over alleged narcotics, and these facts of life are said to be major stumbling blocks in the way of a Stones tour of the United States.

Chicago Clobbered At Ball Game

LOS ANGELES—Pete Cetera, bassist and vocalist for Chicago, had his jaw broken and four teeth knocked out at Dodger Stadium May 20th in what apparently was a "disagreement" over the length of his hair.

Cetera's injuries apparently resulted from an unprovoked attack by three unidentified men during a Dodger-Chicago Cubs game, which several members of the group (formerly known as the Chicago Transit Authority) attended with family and friends.

The 23-year-old former Chicagoan was hospitalized with a jaw broken in three places and multiple contusions and underwent five hours of surgery before being placed in an intensive care unit. He was released seven days later.

According to witnesses Walt Parazaider, the band's woodwind player, and Jack Goudie, the group's road manager, the incident started when Goudie was hassled at a refreshment stand by two men who called him "a faggot, a draft-dodger and a long-haired dope freak." One of the men allegedly grabbed Goudie and Goudie in turn grabbed the attacker and pushed him against a wall, breaking a window. Goudie then returned to his seat.

After which, Parazaider said, security guards approached the party and asked Goudie to accompany them to the ball park's office to account for the damaged window. Parazaider said he tried to go with Goudie, but was asked to stay behind.

"Jack and the guards left and the next thing I knew some guy started calling me a faggot and a draft-dodger," Parazaider said. "And somebody threw a beer at Pete."

Parazaider said it was then that Cetera was pushed to the floor of the grandstand and pummeled by three men, while he (Parazaider) was held by a fourth man, keeping him from joining the fray.

Parazaider said the security guards returned to the scene about 10 minutes later, after the fight had ended. Cetera was taken to Good Samaritan Hospital by his wife and Danny Seraphine, the band's drummer, and the others went to the ball park office to make their report.

No one has been arrested or charged in the incident.

Chicago (the ball team) won, 6-0.

Erratum:

In Issue No. 36 it was erroneously stated that the Rolling Stones were setting up a record company to be named Pear. The story is untrue and appeared by accident.

Festival Shucks

By JERRY HOPKINS

LOS ANGELES — Going to a pop festival? Be prepared for a Bummer this Summer.

You may find many of the 40 or so festivals planned for this warmest of seasons a joyous event, but you also may be the prey of a shuck-and-jive man, one of the inept and/or greedy promoters who've been leaping for the festival bandwagon the past year or so.

Especially in recent months, increasing numbers of artists and groups haven't shown up for festivals, because their names were advertised long before deals were made, or deposit checks from the promoters bounced. Others haven't been paid for performing at all. Too, musicians and kids together have been the victims of poor sound systems, high ticket costs, and inadequate facilities. Some of the festival-concerts haven't even been held, once promoted.

Festival?

Be festive and be hopeful, but also beware.

Just why pop festivals usually aren't quite what they're supposed to be makes a long and complex tale to tell. And it somehow seems to represent as well as anything else just what the entire rock scene is about—from celebration to Art to fraud.

The first pop festival, that held in Monterey two years ago, was by far the best; this no one questions. (We'll forget the older Newport Folk and Jazz Festivals for now.) Since then, according to Lou Adler, one of that festival's directors, "the music industry has prostituted Monterey. Monterey was a climax of a fantastic time of our music. And now it's a hype. It's become a promoter's tool."

Adler, founder of Ode Records, said he gets 10 festival offers a week for Spirit, one of the groups recording for Ode. Spirit's only done one so far, he said, and is committed to only two more.

"Most aren't worth playing. Even the one we did play, at Santa Clara in May—that was a bust. They pulled the plug on the band after 15 minutes, and everything was buy-buy-buy."

"It's really a drag sometimes. Even when you say yes. The date gets closer and closer and still the promoter hasn't put down his front money, the 50 percent of the contracted sum that's supposed to be the guarantee. So you ask him about the bread, and he gives you the big stall. Tomorrow. Tomorrow. Finally you say the guys will be there, but they have to be paid before they go on the stage. You can't do much else; by then it's too late to get a booking somewhere else. So the promoter promises faithfully, and of course when the guys arrive, there isn't any money."

Adler referred to lists of "unreliable" groups and acts he thought were being published for concert promoters. (One is that distributed by the National Educational Conference and provided to college and university concert bookers in its membership.) Adler said there should be similar lists of unreliable *promoters*, available to the acts and agencies.

There already is at least one such list—that compiled by the American Federation of Musicians (AFM). This is that union's "Do Not Play For or With" list, appearing in its monthly magazine *Overture*. In Los Angeles alone, this runs to more than 200 clubs, production companies and individuals and according to AFM business representative Frank Sorkin, they're all there because they're in some way burned a musician.

(The list becomes a moderately or potentially useful tool when it is learned members may be fined or suspended if they work for or with those on the list—although usually this rule is not enforced rigidly.)

Sorkin is a young woodwind player who became AFM's "house freak" in L.A. 18 months ago. ("I'm in charge of what they call the rock department," he said. "And by their definition, that includes everyone from Ray Charles to Joni Mitchell to Frank Zappa.") At the moment, policing festival promoters is one of his biggest headaches, and as a direct result of a festival that flopped in Los Angeles in May, he said the AFM is instituting several new rules for promoters.

"That was the mess they called the Country Pop Festival," Sorkin said. "The promoters paid for the grading

FESTIVALS



In San Jose: the waiting game

of the festival grounds and they paid for the portable chemical toilets, but they didn't pay a single musician. You dig it? They paid for the shithouses, but they didn't pay for the music! That's the way it usually is; the musicians are the last to get paid.

"So we—the union—we've decided to get heavy."

Sorkin explained "heavy" by using as an example a pop festival planned for Los Angeles in June. He said he had asked the promoters of the three-day concert to deposit a \$25,000 bond with the AFM or show proof that same amount had been paid to talent agencies as a deposit against payment for the groups' actual performances.

"Promoters say they can't afford the money in front until they sell some tickets. We say: Then don't go into the concert business!! It's too bad things have gotten this way, but if you're a promoter, you have to go into these things expecting the worst and still be able to cover it."

"Look, a lot of people are making a lot of money in music today, and so here's this guy who sells used cars, man, and he is a *crooked* used car dealer. Well, he sees all the bread being made and so he decides he's a promoter. Trouble is, he's still crooked."

"Unfortunately, the music business attracts a lot of these greedy bastards. And not only are they crooked, they don't even know what they're trying to do. They don't know shit from providing everything a festival should have."

In some instances, of course, the poor facilities and perhaps even the no-pay aspects of a pop festival gone wrong are rooted in naivete or peculiar circumstance, not in boozery and greed. An example might be the Big Pow-Wow held three days in May in Miami. Very few of the acts—which included the Grateful Dead, the Youngbloods, Rhinoceros, Joe South—were paid and afterward some of the bands' managers and agents were crying thief.

"The people who ran the concert are a beautiful, spiritual tribe," said Dr. Timothy Leary, one of the festival celebrants. "They were going to pay our expenses, Rosalie's and mine. We saw what the situation was and we absorbed our own costs. Miami is so hostile, after the Doors concert and the Jackie Gleason movement. It was hard for them to get any publicity. Besides that, the kids are young and they just didn't have much experience, so they lost 20 or 30 thousand dollars."

"But everything was so beautiful," Leary concluded, "and what's more important: the motive or the money?"

Ex-Crawdaddy editor Paul Williams was another who attended the Big Rock Pow-Wow. "Say something unpleasant about *Together, Inc.*, the people who sponsored the festival, and you may kill what little is left of a good scene in Miami," he said. "The family was just naive. They didn't realize they could bargain with agents. They just accepted the first figure they were given. Things like that. Everybody lost money, but

everybody gained, really. It was that jubilant, that free and open."

He told a story about Rhinoceros: "They were the last act scheduled for Sunday night and when they arrived it was clear there wouldn't be any money to pay them. Rhinoceros went on and played anyway. They said they'd come to make music and that's what they were going to do, money or no money."

This seems to be where most musicians make their stand. They may be angry when when they don't get paid and may even file a complaint with the AFM, but often they play for free anyway. "We thought we were gonna get paid just before we went on," Chris Hillman of the Flying Burrito Brothers said of the Country Pop Festival. "When we got there, we found out: no pay. But we figured what the hell, the equipment was set up and all, so we played."

Hillman has watched the rock scene change over the years (as a bluegrass mandolin player, then one of the original Byrds) and he said many of the problems that exist today do so because the concert and festival promoter holds an enviable poker hand.

"There aren't that many places to play any more, let's face it," Hillman said. "There are only five or six Fillmore-type places in the whole country. Other than that, all we've got are the packaged shows—what they call festivals. And most of them are a laugh."

There are other factors, too—as in Palm Springs in April and Miami in May, when gate-crashers made it difficult to collect enough from ticket sales to pay everyone, and besides that, caused police to get up-tight.

The reactionary atmosphere that sometimes exists—as in Miami currently, in Monterey in 1968 when a second festival was quashed—also has its effect, either cancelling the festival or making it more expensive and more difficult to administer.

In most cases, however, the Bummer in the Summer (or any other season) seems to be the creation of greed. So much is to be made so quickly, it attracts people who have no experience, no taste, or no love for the thing that is the cause of it all: Music.

The agents and the managers start bellowing for a larger slice of the pie... the promoters just start bellowing... and music takes hind teat.

San Jose Scam

SAN JOSE, Calif.—The second annual Northern California Folk Rock Festival, staged over a three-day period on the racetrack of the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds, bummed out everybody—promoter, producer, bands, music fans, cops, and fairground officials.

Bob Blodgett, backer and co-producer of the event, lost some \$15,000; he had figured on 80,000 ticket sales for the four concerts; the final count hovered around 42,000. In addition, he was the target of a phony-ticket scheme which brought in some 8,000 counterfeited ad-

missions. And a congregation of hip groups, upset at Blodgett for his handling of past rock events, staged a free rock festival just a mile away from the fairgrounds, effectively blanketing Blodgett's.

At the county fairgrounds—usually used for agricultural exhibits—the crowds saw, essentially, a cattle show. Groups were literally herded on and off stage, with the plugs pulled on Canned Heat and Jefferson Airplane. Spirit did three numbers and had to bow out in favor of the "time schedule" imposed by fairgrounds officials. Chuck Berry missed a plane and arrived one concert late, and another mix-up resulted in Eric Burdon arriving two days late. Several bands, including Led Zeppelin and Muddy Waters, simply cancelled out before the festival—but most of the audiences didn't find out until they arrived at the fairgrounds. Publicity was nil, at best.

But it won't happen again.

Immediately after the concert, which ended May 25th, the executive board of the County Fair Association heard a police report on 23 arrests and a number of shouted complaints from nearby residents, and decided to ban future rock festivals at the fairgrounds.

Local cops told the supervisors that 23 arrests was "not a bad record," considering the shuck shows and the sizable crowds of youths. But nearby residents had their own reports to file.

One woman, shouting at the fair board supervisors, described the festival scene from her vantage point, across the road from the fairgrounds: "We had queers walking up and down our lawn, saying they were God. I had to clean excrement from my lawn, and that's no picnic, sirs!"

She said that festival-goers camping out on her property were like "a bunch of animals" and "boys and girls were lying in the street making love in broad daylight."

The supervisors said any future musical events will be confined to a one-day event in a 5,000-seat auditorium.

But Blodgett is in no hurry to try another rock show. He blamed himself for "overbooking" the festival, but blamed botch-ups on the part of bands for half the troubles. "The promoters pay out the money and take all the gambles," he said, "and they lose control of the performers. It's a bad scene altogether."

(The free "be-in" held in quasi-competition with Blodgett's shows also had troubles. Stolen cars, property damage, stabbings, and one gang-bang with an involuntary chick headed the list of non-musical noise.)

The Beat Goes On

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J.: A big one on August 1st, 2nd, and 3rd. Begins Friday at 4 pm with Johnny Winter, Crosby, Stills and Nash, Procol Harum, Joni Mitchell, Iron Butterfly, Booker T & the MGs, Mother Earth, Chicago, and Santana. Saturday's lineup carries Jefferson Airplane, Creedence Clearwater Revival, Arthur Brown, Butterfield Blues Band, B.B. King, Grateful Dead, Hugh Masekela, Byrds, Lighthouse and the American Dream. Sunday's show headlines Janis Joplin, along with the Mothers, Canned Heat, Moody Blues, Three Dog Night, Joe Cocker, Little Richard, Dr. John the Night Tripper, Sir Douglas Quintet, Buddy Miles Express, and the Buddy Rich Band. Festival is on the Atlantic City Race Course, and there are camping facilities adjacent to the track.

TORONTO, ONTARIO: An announced \$100,000 worth of talent is set for June 21st and 22nd at Varsity Stadium near the University. Top names: The band, Blood Sweat and Tears, Chuck Berry, Johnny Winter, Sly and the Family Stone, Tiny Tim, Slim Harpo, Procol Harum, Carla Thomas, Al Kooper, Eric Anderson, Steppenwolf, and Dr. John the Night Tripper. Shows begin at 1:30 P.M. and end at 11:30 P.M.

CONCORD, CALIF.: The first Concord Summer Festival is being planned to run from August 26th through the 31st. Plans call for a wide variety of musical presentations—classical, jazz, and pop—in a park adjoining Concord High School. Two acts signed so far are the Don Ellis orchestra and the Oakland Symphony Orchestra, with guest conductor Lalo Schifrin.

CALIFORNIA WEBS HAT'S SHIT KICKIN' BLUES

By John Grissim, Jr.

GEEMINY, it's amazing. Here it is Monday night, just terrible weather and here come the folks. And you know, if they like you, they really *like* you. One nice thing about it—they don't insult you, you know?"

Over 3,000 people had just driven through heavy rain and paid \$10.00 to see America's number one country artist at the Circle Star Theatre near San Francisco. Mercy!

Buck Owens finishes his coffee and leans back on the dressing room couch, heels propped on the low Danish modern table before him. His tailored western suit is conservative, no silver studs, buckles or flashy buttons. Only the boots excel: black patent leather curving up to pencil-tip sharpness. His face has character. Smiles are real, the eyes now and again betraying a hint of shrewdness. Sandy blond hair, the barest suggestion of what-me-worry ears, a rich mid-western accent—he is authentic.

A response to a question about country music trends somehow turns into a rundown on recent Hooper ratings for Buck Owens-owned radio stations. Before the morning in-traffic sampling can be detailed, two women in their mid-thirties swoop into the room, shutting the door behind them.

"If you'll autograph my program, Mr. Owens, I'll give ya something." The shorter of the two, looking asexual in a sleeveless cocktail dress and a lacquered wig, offers a pen with an outstretched bowing arm. Her companion remains standing near the door, giggling, then sees herself in a mirror and instinctively checks her looks—wet-lipped smile, mini-skirt and piano legs. She giggles again.

"Well alright, girls, what're your names?" Owens obligingly takes the pen and signs the program, in return for which he is handed a bumper sticker for Sil's Club in Concord and a dirty joke cocktail napkin.

Everyone smiles, sort of. Piano legs moves forward and says she is related to a second cousin in the Owens clan and that "Billy Jean came here tonight, too, and she sends her best." Owens thanks them and allows the conversation to die a natural death. In short order he is back to the Hooper ratings, about which more later.

Several hundred feet away the lobby is crowded with late arrivals and pre-show tilters spilling out of the theatre's mammoth cocktail lounge. There is an abundance of Masonic lodge pins, cigars, spit curls, Eileen Feather high heels and Kunney casuals, shiny-seat pants, wide cuffs, short hair and large ears. A few servicemen in civvies lean against the wall, chewing gum, smoking, lonely. The atmosphere is boisterous and pungent, a blend of hair spray, aftershave lotion, cigarette smoke, Prairie Rose perfume and a whole lot of har-dee-har-har laughter.

A few turtlenecks and medallions radiate beneath double-breasted jackets (example—maroon over lime pistache) but the dominant theme is dressy PTA. The young marrieds, ten years out of high school, carry the residual look of Saturday night out with dad's car—Wildroot pompadours holding hands with VO-5 page boys. On the whole the audience is middle-aged, affluent, a little overweight, and fiercely loyal to country music.

The program kicks off with Buddy Lane and the Wild West, a local fill-in doing a free gig for exposure. The rest of the bill—Rose Maddox, Sheb Wooley, Tommy Collins, and Freddy Hart—all work for Buck Owens' personal management corporation, a nice family package, which, along with Owens and the Buckaroos, sells for \$7500 a concert.

Rose Maddox follows the opener, no longer fresh at fifty but still at it. A silver lame mini dress with full length sleeves and matching boots has replaced the leather skirt and western vest of 20 years ago. The kleig lights shine for a mercifully brief moment upon an aging cosmetic face. Her performance is perfunctory, a little desperate, but enough to bring applause for her pre-war hits.

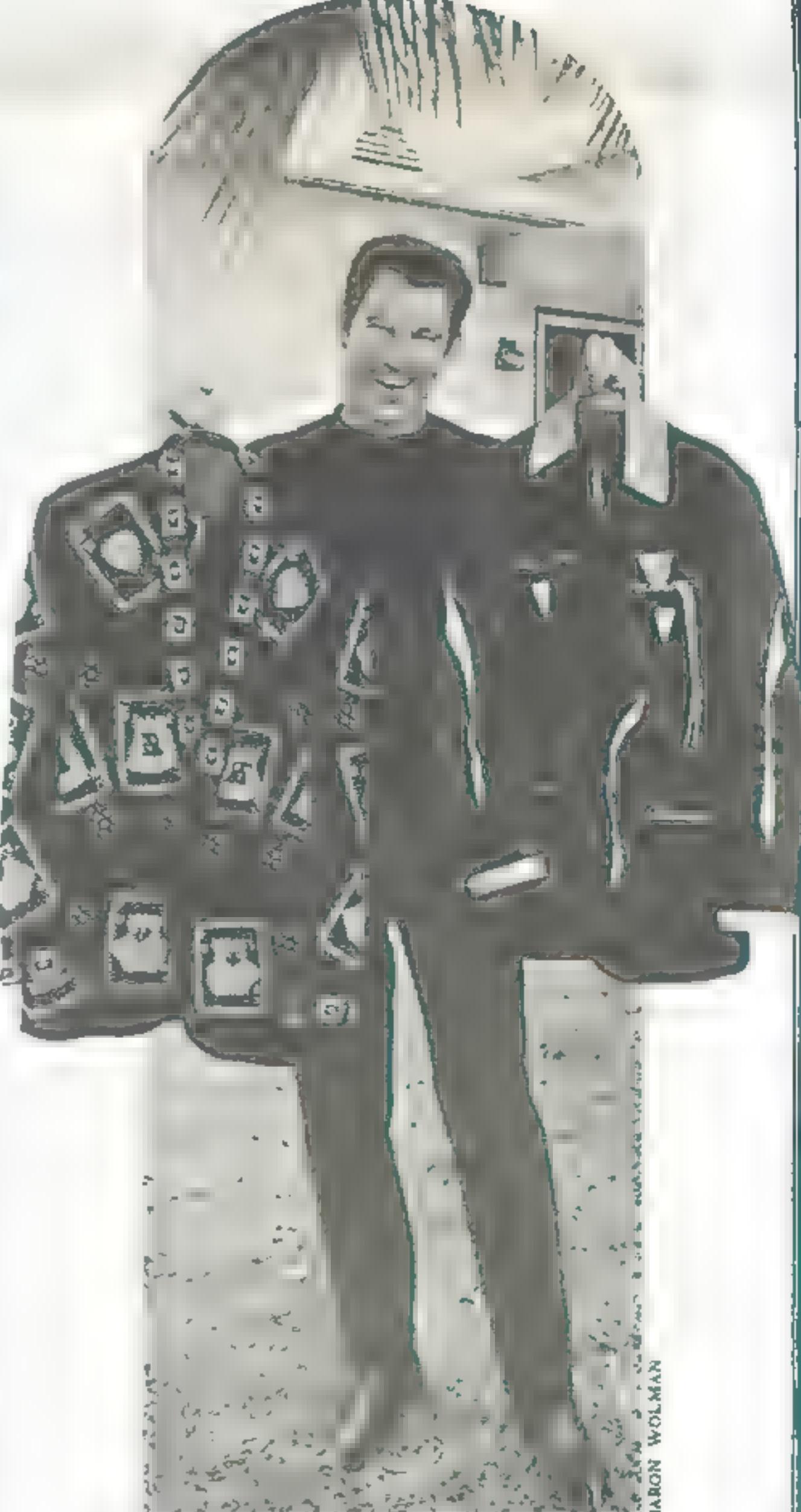
It's like that with Country. Develop a following, keep singing, and you have equity for 30 years. Sheb Wooley follows Maddox with a string of Bible Beli jokes and novelty tunes (remember "Flying Purple People Eater"?). Freddy Hart and Tommy Collins—fading old favorites—wrap up the first half of the show with half-hour sets. They draw a good response but the house is clearly gearing up for the big moment.

Buck Owens is greeted with wild, foot stomping applause, cat calls, home made signs ("Buck's Our Boy," "Buck Is No. 1"), and half a dozen rebel yells. Except for respectful silence during slow-paced cheatin' songs, the boozy adulation continues with spontaneous yee-hahs whenever the drummer for the Buckaroos gets heavy on the bass pedal during instrumental breaks.



Rose Maddox

JOHN GRISIM



Freddie Hart with two Nudes

DARON WOLMAN

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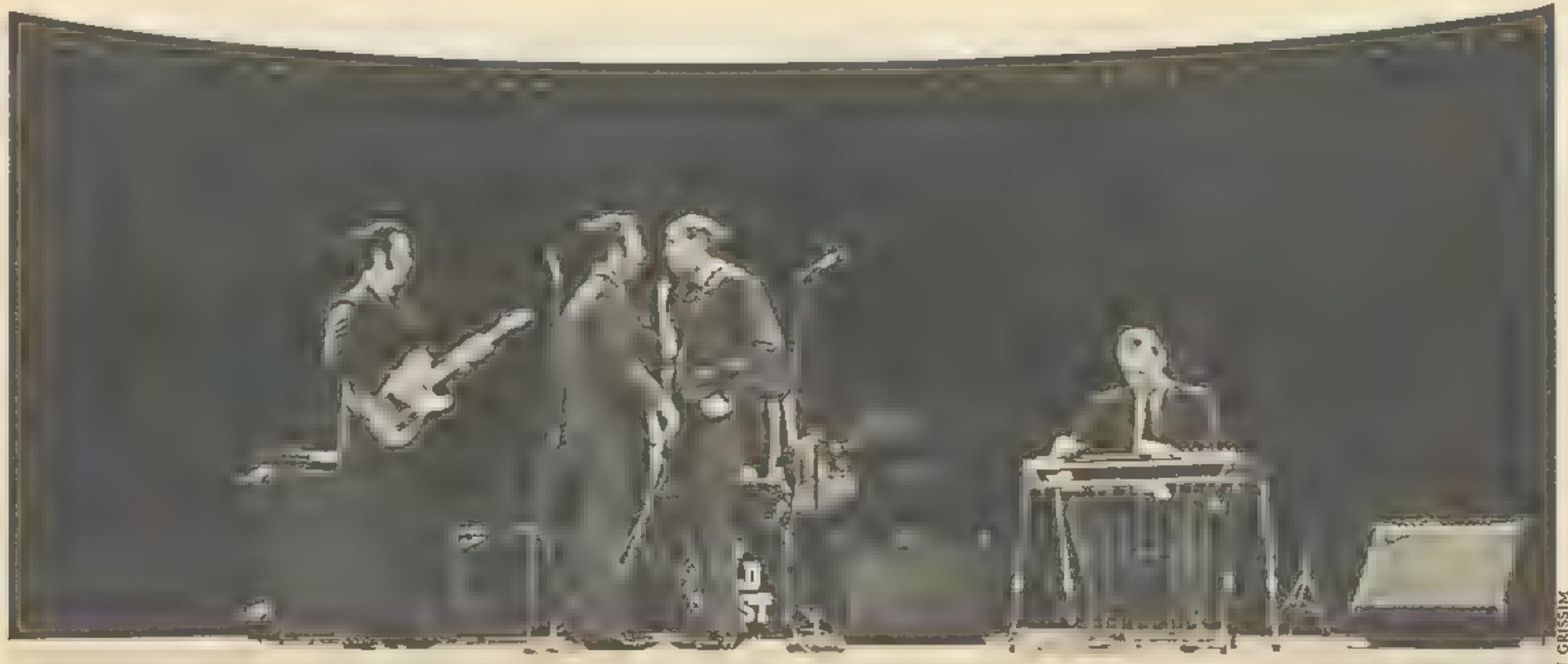
**THE
IMPRESSIONS
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FORGOTTEN STORY**



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JOHN GRISSIM

The first two bars of virtually every number are greeted with noisy recognition. Owens' tenor voice is clear and strong without a trace of resonance or vibrato, but it reeks with sincerity. Billie Jean and her friends are visibly moved when he breaks into "Togeeather Again . . ." followed by "I Got The Hungries for Your Love I'm Waitin' in Your Welfare Line." Everyone's a good'un in Buck's corral of country hits.

In the front row a happy teamster with a speck of toilet paper covering a shaving cut on his chin shifts his weight and stifles a belch while applauding.

The banter between Owens and his group is ritualistic and slow paced, roughly comparable to the Renfro Valley Barn Dance. Sex jokes are out but pee-pee doo-doo one liners are in: "Yes sir, I bought some Ex Lax today . . . fastest moving product on the market." It's old stuff and in its own way an unspoken reaffirmation of the values which seemed to work so nicely in simpler, less dangerous times.

The program was morally good. The only sour moment came when the MC during intermission announced that "one of America's great folk singers is in the audience -Miss Joan Baez." The boos held sway over the applause.

WHY IS Buck Owens the top draw in Country? "We try to generate some excitement and give them something to relate to. I think that's important to this class of people. On the whole country music has not yet reached the point of providing that excitement because most of the performers feel that too much movin' and groovin' is an insult, that people won't understand it. Maybe some wouldn't, but gee, I don't feel that way."

"I've seen guys that didn't have record one go before all country audiences and just stay them. For instance these two boys that just started with some of my companies—The Hagers—they have a predominantly modern-rock-pop-Beatles sound although they do some country-western and blues. And gee whizz, they can just wreck the audience, knock 'em out. . . . This speaks well for that kind of performance."

The country-rock-pop-Beatles and Western blues sound is not yet the national norm in California's cornucopia of bars and night clubs featuring live country and western music but something close to it seems to be packing them in, and on Saturday nights the avid shikker can whoop it up with such groups as Eddie Kanak and the Nashville Rejects, Curt's Oklahoma Cotton Pickers, Bob Blum and the Blenders, Toby Tyler and the Night Lifers, and Wanda Lee and Her Wanderers.

All this is possible in California because of the great Okie invasion which began in the Thirties and has continued unabated for over three decades. In truth the hundreds of thousands who migrated to the West Coast were from the South as much as the Midwest, but the vanguard consisted of refugees from the dustbowl of Oklahoma, eastern New Mexico and Texas. They were followed during the war by a huge influx of defense plant workers from the South.

No one really knew the magnitude of these demographic shifts until a post-war survey revealed that over 80 percent of the southern California population was from the South and the Midwest. And they had brought their music with them. Those who doubted needed only turn on their radio to find Roy Acuff's "Great Speckled Bird" being rammed everywhere. What had started out as an art form peculiar to the hills of the rural Southeast in the 1890's had somehow endured—even thrived—in a calamitous era of Depression, Dustbowl and World war.

Today country music on the West Coast is booming. Of the 650 AM radio stations with all-country programming in the U.S. and Canada, California leads with 24. Its tally of 258 Country clubs considerably exceeds that of any other state. Several country music television shows are videotaped in Los Angeles and San Francisco for national syndication. The top three country artists in 1968—Glen Campbell, Buck Owens and Merle Haggard—all live in southern California.

Buck Owens & His Buckaroos



CLIFFIE STONE

and record in Hollywood. At least a dozen other country and western artists record in Los Angeles. Two publishing houses—Blue Book and Central Songs—have Hollywood offices, as does the prestigious Academy of Country and Western Music. Further north in Bakersfield, Buck Owens' OMAC Artists Corporation is the third largest country booking agency in the nation with 21 acts. Recording studios are being constructed to serve two new country labels.

In fact Buck Owens is so popular that all 21 singles he has recorded (since 1963) have made No. One on the Country charts—without a miss. Now the inevitable has happened: Owens has recently been named by CBS to co-host with Roy Clark the replacement for the Smothers Brothers Show. Get ready. It's called *Hee Haw* and is billed as a country-western *Laugh-In* from Nashville. The announcement came shortly after Richard Nixon's first 100 days in office.

COUNTRY music has been hailed as America's great gift to people the world over. It has also been called shikker music and white man's blues and variously described as simplistic, unsophisticated, right wing, boring, bed-rock Baptist, red-neck, ignorant, and underneath it all, probably racist. It is the only native American music which has been simultaneously damned as a fossilized art form and praised as the well-spring of modern folk music and rock.

Few people are more aware of this than Cliffie Stone, head of Central Songs, one of the five largest publishing houses in the country field. Stone is one of the few people who can locate his rambling one story headquarters in Los Angeles two blocks from Hollywood and Vine, furnish his offices with rocking chairs, ruffled curtains and ranch style couches with wooden arm rests and gingham slip covers—and get away with it.

A heavy, congenial man in his early fifties, Stone describes himself as a hard core country music lover. He is also very bright and still likes his work. Leaving his desk to fill a substantial armchair upholstered in yellow leather with seam piping, he exudes the confidence born of right decisions in a successful career.

"Country music has an honesty and a sincerity that comes from the heart—the kind of thing that you just can't get in a pop song. It possesses the kind of emotionalism that sells, a thing that you can believe in."

"Women are the principal buyers of country music. If you can appeal to something they can relate to, that's what hits them. It can be a cheatin' song, or a drinkin' song, or a lonely song where they're home all day with the kids and they're doing the dishes and washing the clothes and doing the cooking and the old man is out drinkin' somewhere."

Stone has a keen sensitivity for the needs of that audience. The son of a long haired banjo player whose name in the Twenties was Herman the Hermit, Stone started out during the Depression as a country bass player on the West Coast, got into publishing, then booked up with Tennessee Ernie Ford as his manager for 15 years. While with Ford he set up Central Song's management arm to handle country and pop artists such as Molly Bee and Tommy Sands. In 1959 he began producing *Melody Ranch*, a syndicated television show from KTLA in Los Angeles featuring various country artists.

Aside from Ernie Ford's bonanza years on television and the record charts, the primary money-maker for Stone has been publishing. His success in that field hinged on an ability to mold the components of a country song into a shape that sells. Invariably this means telling a specific story about everyday people, something that "Tea for Two" never got around to.

While a country verse rhyme scheme is usually AABB or ABBA, greater emphasis is placed on fitting lyrics to a 4/4 or 3/4 metric structure. The song's title—often an involved punch line—emerges in a standard four-line chorus after verse I, followed by verse II, chorus, a short bridge, verse III and a final chorus. The pattern is identical to the pop ballads of the Fifties.

The difference shows up in the extraordinary character of the lyrics. Country writers have traditionally been able to elevate the most mundane circumstances to a level of near art. Witness Johnny Carver's "One More Night Together" (Reeklein Music, Inc.—BMI):

I go bowling with my buddies every Wednesday night,

And it's your night out with the girls, so things work out just fine.

The one I leave at home tells me to have a good time,

And you know he won't wait up if you're not in by nine.

CHORUS:

And we've got one more night together, one more night together,

Let's make up for all the lonely nights we spend at home.

Yes, it's one more night together, one more night together,

Loving you the way I do the night can't last too long.

The principal variation is the story song which goes on and on without chorus, usually ending up with last line irony which elicits either tears or laughter. A recent favorite in this genre is Porter Wagoner's "Carol County Accident."

These songs are heartfelt and sincere, not easily confused with such novelty hits as "Billie Broke My Heart at Walgreen's and I Cried All the Way to Sears" or "Does the Chewing Gum Lose Its Flavor on the Bedpost (Overnight.)" But to someone unfamiliar with country music it is often difficult to distinguish between a deliberate self-lampoon of country manners and a dead serious ballad.

In the Twenties and Thirties Christian temperance restricted love and sex to the insipid level of be-my-valentine (e.g., Carl Butler's "If Tears Were Pennies and Heartaches Were Gold"). This limitation was also true with pop music. After the war, however, Kitty Wells started telling it like it was with "It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels."

With the lid off, country music was at last able to deal explicitly with alcoholism, marital woes and cheat-

—Continued on Page 17

THE DEVIANTS...

INSTANT GABBAGE

Imported from England



We're not allowed to say B.S. in this ad.

This is an ad for a West Coast phenomenon called Poco. And it's tough to write.

First of all, the group (Richie Furay, Jim Messina, Rusty Young, George Grantham) have an illustrious rock past, but they won't let us talk about it. They'd rather be bought for their new sound.

Secondly, unless you live in LA, you haven't heard Poco. You may have heard of them—they're one of the most talked about groups on the coast.

Typical reactions: "I hear seeds of what will be one of the top sounds anywhere." "Poco's four guys with a great new sound." "Poco is heart-clutchingly good."

So, you need justification to buy the Poco album, we suggest you call your favorite FM station and ask them to play a cut from *Pickin' Up The Pieces*. Any cut except side two, cut two. Listen to what's going down instrumentally and vocally. Then you'll know all you have to about Poco. No B.S.

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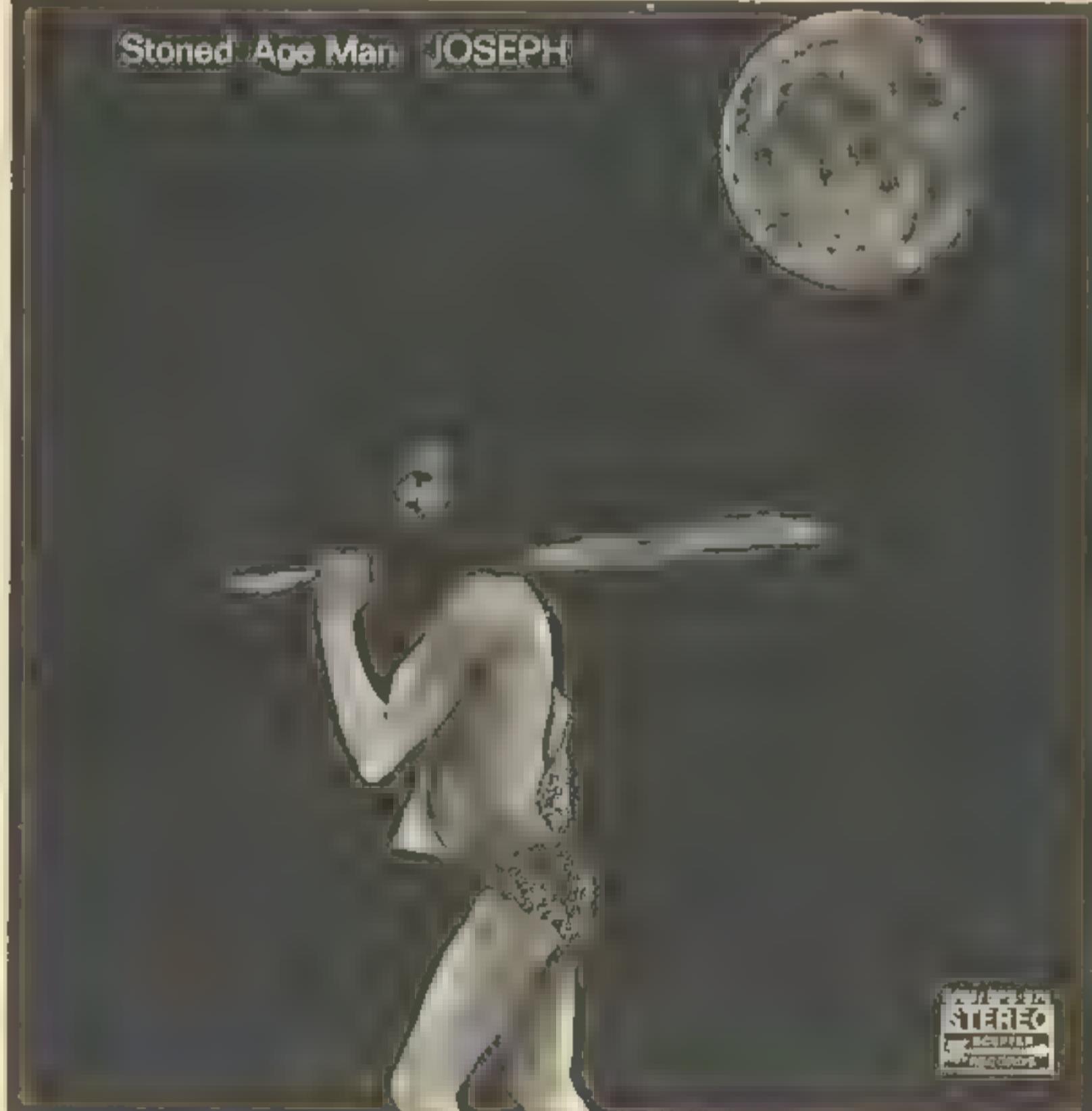
Stoned Age Man JOSEPH

Stoned Age Man

JOSEPH

I first saw Joseph in Houston, Texas. He was on stage in what was publicized as the "Battle of Blues Guitars" between B. B. King, T Bone Walker and Joseph Long. He blew my mind. After the show I immediately went backstage and asked him if he was recording for any record company. He said he was offered many times but he refused because he was not allowed to do his own thing. This is Joseph's first album. It's on Scepter Records. He does his own thing! I need to say no more. This album "Stoned Age Man" speaks for Joseph.

Steve Tyrell
SCEPTER RECORDS



A NEW ALBUM ON
SCEPTER RECORDS

ing, with marvelous frankness. "Married by the Bible, Divorced by the Law" (circa 1950) started a new tradition which has been maintained by such offerings at "One Has My Name, the Other Has My Heart," "Who's Julie," and a popular number by Linda Manning who exhorts her errant husband to "put me in a high chair, tie a bib around my neck and Feed Me One More Lie." When several years ago wife-swapping showed signs of catching on nationally, "Let's Invite Them On Over" got a lot of air play on country stations.

Alcoholic songs such as "Losers Lounge" have always been popular, the latest example being Hank Snow's "Let's Get Drunk and Be Somebody," sample lyrics:

*Let's get drunk and be somebody,
Drink everything from champagne to toddy,
A gushing goblet goads my ghostly gloom.*

A 1967-68 favorite in this category was Hank Thompson's "What Made Milwaukee Famous Has Made a Loser out of Me."

One of last year's top selling singles was "D-I-V-O-R-C-E" by Tammy Wynette, a tearful confession in which a mother tells how she and her ex-husband used to spell out the words they didn't want little Joe to hear—the kicker being that little Joe thinks C-U-S-T-O-D-Y is fun and games. It's a classic weeper which has inspired Hollywood and Nashville to dredge up an old gag line appropriate for the title of Miss Wynette's next record: "Don't Say Fuck Around the K-I-D-S."

Lesser tragedies in the marriage/divorce genre are "Gotta Lotta Hen House Ways," "She May Be Sour Grapes to You But She's Sweet Wine to Me," and a real loser's lament by Jimmy Snyder with the vaguely obscene title "I Got Candy All Over My Face."

Satire and social comment has long been a staple crop for Country writers, the most recent success being "Harper Valley P.T.A." which crossed over to the pop field to sell six million records last year. Little Jimmy Dickens has done well in the past with "Where Were You When the Ship Hit the Sand" and "May the Bird of Paradise Fly Up Your Nose." Federal highway building programs came under attack in "I Got the Interstate Running Through My Outhouse" but top honors for social significance go to a new classic, Nat Stuckey's "Don't Give Me No Plastic Saddle (I want to feel that leather when I ride)."

What makes such far out lyrics possible—even believable—is the music. The traditional country sound is characterized by guitar, fiddle and banjo, augmented by harmonica, zither, dobro or bass. It uses stock chord progressions, conventional leads and breaks, and a driving rhythm with no embellishment. Though in the past it has had a predictable sameness to it, the instrumental backing for a country song can evoke an incredibly broad emotional response, ideally suited to involved lyrics. Properly played, there is probably no instrument which is capable of making a sadder, more lonesome sound—or a happier one for that matter—than a fiddle. On that subject Jerry Ward, a former guitarist for Merle Haggard, puts country fiddlers in an honored position: "Musicians tune fiddles, General Motors tunes violins."

The majority of Country writers use a guitar for composition, generally choosing open keys (C, D, E, A and G) which allow the most resonant response from sounding board instruments. Song writing has changed little since Jimmie Rodgers wrote in the Twenties but today's added use of drums, pedal steel guitar, piano, vocal harmonies, even harpsichord have made some arrangements far more complete, thus shifting much of the burden for hit-making to the producer.

SCOTT TURNER, head of country A&R for Imperial, writes and produces. In style of dress (two-button continental cardigan, ID bracelet, Italian slacks, flamboyant neck scarf) he is strictly L.A., but in his heart he's all country.

"I make my records for the farmer in the Ozarks who's been out there plowing his field all day and who comes in at night and turns on the radio. He doesn't want to have to think about 'the clouded blue haze through the canyons of the memories of your mind.' He doesn't want to think about what he's hearing, just feel the kind of direct relationship to a song that will make him say, 'Hey, that's me they're talking about!'"

Turner creates that grass roots, straight-from-the-

"For me the most effective combination for today's market is to take a song written by a West Coast writer, give it to an Arkansas-raised country artist who now lives in California and record it in Nashville."

The West Coast components to Turner's formula provide the touch of sophistication which he believes distinguishes a West Coast country song. As for the Nashville sound:

"It's six or eight guys who have been playing together for maybe ten years—people like Grady Martin, Chip Young, Jerry Reed. They're in that studio for one thing, to make a record they're proud of. Many times I've heard a take and said 'That's it, guys. I'm happy, it's great,' and they'll ask to do it one more time. That's taking an interest in my product. I can walk out of the studio with four... masterpieces. That's all I can call them."

Included among his recent efforts is Johnny Carver's "One More Night Together." Turner records in Nashville once a month on the average, brings his product—masterpieces back to Hollywood and, when required, dubs in back-up vocals and/or violins using West Coast talent. He has the background to make it work. A former lead guitarist behind Tommy Sands and Guy Mitchell, Turner at one time or another spent a year with Eddie Fisher trying to teach him to sing Country ("It was rough"), ran the publishing end of A&M records during its fledgling phase, and worked two years for Clifftone Stone as a resident song writer.

While in the latter job he wrote or co-authored "Shutters and Boards," "Hick Town" (an Ernie Ford hit), and altogether about 50 songs for most of the major country artists. Turner's compositions don't always ring a bell with Top 40 listeners but when someone the likes of bard driving Dave Dudley steps up to the mike in a Nashville studio to record "Trucker's Prayer," friend, you're talkin' 40,000 in sales at the very least.

The remuneration for a song writer whose Country entry happens to cross over to the top field and really take off is substantial. Figuring a record royalty return of one cent per record, Tom T. Hall's "Harper Valley P.T.A." (six million sales) netted its author a minimum of \$60,000, exclusive of income from BMI performance, sheet music, lyric rights, overseas revenues and miscellaneous uses. A more realistic figure for a single which sells well in both markets, say 200,000, would be a basic return of \$2,000 compared to half that (or less) for Country alone.

A song which breaks into the Top Ten on both charts almost invariably becomes the title cut on a follow-up LP. With album sales currently equaling or exceeding those singles, an author can look forward to an additional \$2,000, again based on 200,000 copies sold. If he performed as well as wrote the song he is in an even better position. The combined song and record royalties add up to roughly five percent of the list price, in this case a return of \$10,000.

Though revenue from performance societies (ASCAP and BMI) vary considerably, a hit song generally brings in \$500-\$1,000 from domestic airplay, however, the return can be much higher. Every time Glen Campbell sang "Gentle On My Mind" to open each edition of last year's Summer Brothers Smothers Show, author John Hartford and his publisher together pocketed around \$500.

The obvious solution is to leave nothing to chance—write a pop-country song, record it using a heavy foot on the drums, and lush up the delivery with choral backing and fiddles (or violins, depending on which market one is discussing). The only drawback is the greater risk of ending up with a dud which satisfies neither market. But the potential for hitting it on the money explains why a good percentage of the 300 or so Country writers in California also write pop.

Charlie Williams, a country disc jockey for KFOX in Los Angeles has written extensively for both Johnny Cash and Ray Charles. Don Robertson ("Happy Whistler," "Ninety MPH Down a Dead End Street") was responsible for a good chunk of Les Paul and Mary Ford's pop material in the early Fifties. (He can also lay claim to introducing "pedal piano" to Nashville—a keyboard style made so popular by Floyd Cramer that RCA, which had both Robertson and Cramer under contract, prohibited him from "copying Cramer's style" when recording his own songs). Others include Hal Blaine ("Ringo"—which crossed into pop), James Hendricks ("Look To Your Soul," "Summer Rain") as well as writer-performer Jerry Wallace and Red Steagall, Billy Mize, Bobby George and Jerry Fuller.

One exception is Cy Coben, a former pop writer who 15 years ago got tired of "moon in June" lyrics and decided to try his hand at "Drunkin' and thinkin'." He has stayed in the Country field, written over 650 songs and has yet to get bored.

CY COBEN has been around country music so long that he can remember when Nashville wanted to "take WSM and the Grand Ole Opry and push them and their god-dam hillbilly music right into the Cumberland River."

That was twenty years ago, but the Atkins of the South eventually grew tolerant, even to the point of accepting a nice Jewish kid from New Jersey who claims he couldn't tell a cow pasture from a corn field. Moreover, Coben belonged to ASCAP at a time when that organization considered country music and rhythm and blues (then called race music) a little less popular than slack key ukulele. The view was not entirely groundless.

"In those days country music was very loose in both meter and lyrics. You could throw in a half measure, even an extra measure, or hold a note if it sounded alright. There were no rules, no sophistication... No one had ever heard of a ninth chord. But there was plenty of realism."

Coben first heard the direct realism of a country lyric while with a WW II construction battalion in the Solomon Islands. When he returned to New York to continue his career as a pop writer, he started writing country material on the side.

"I think I succeeded because I genuinely loved it, and I stuck by two rules: don't write about something you don't know and don't look down on country music."

Adherence to such maxims may not have made Coben a millionaire but he has long been one of the top Country writers in the business, so much so that his songs are occasionally criticized for being too country. With a large home amidst a woods setting in the San Francisco Bay Area (he moved there in 1963) and permanent living quarters in Nashville where he spends four months of the year, he takes the carping in stride.

Coben looks like a diminutive Martin Balsam or a Keenan Wynn, an irrepressibly happy man whose conversation rolls on with guileless enthusiasm, full of anecdotes, unfinished sentences, hilarious digressions, bits and pieces of lyrics and rapid insights. He will regularly interrupt himself to pick up a guitar and sing a verse or two from songs he wrote for Eddy Arnold, Hank Snow or any of a score of Nashville regulars. There is not a trace of ego, only the excitement of sharing.

"I've written every kind of music there is. You name it, I've written it. All except one thing I couldn't do: rhythm and blues. I tried it but didn't have the feel for it. I guess it was strictly black and I couldn't travel in those circles. There again, being outside I couldn't write about it with sincerity."

Coben's ability to write almost anything was invaluable to RCA's Country pioneer Steve Scholes. In the early Fifties Scholes would take Coben and a recording engineer out into the field to tape the music of the rural South, then return to N. Y. and have Coben write songs containing the same stylistic components.

"That's where my technical understanding paid off [Coben studied music theory and composition in the early Thirties]. I can write to order. It's not hack writing but a professional ability to shape an idea into a specific lyric structure."

He got so good at it that at one point, in September 1951, Coben had the No. One song on both the country and pop charts in Cash Box magazine. Since then he had had at least one song on either the domestic or overseas charts—somewhere. On the side he has written "Piano Roll Blues," "Nobody's Child" (recorded by the Beatles in antiquity), selections for Disney's *Alice in Wonderland*, a children's album of pet animal songs, space poetry for Leonard Nimoy (Star Trek's Dr. Spock), even "some Jewish material for Homer and Jethro for when they play Miami."

"Years ago you had to go through a long apprenticeship to get a solid professional grounding, but today everything is speeded up. Kids today can surround themselves with music—records, cassettes, guitars, radio and television. And they learn very fast... Everywhere there are new musicians, writers and producers, all very young and very hot property."



Cy Coben



John Hartford

BARRY WOLMAN

Why are they beginning to listen to country music?

"What's happened is that young people today are realistic. They aren't the dreamers of yesterday. Because country music has that realism, because it tells it as it really is; they can accept it... Then again music today is becoming desegregated, it's all becoming one, reflecting our times."

"My advantage is that my background as a pop writer is very helpful to me now. For example, I did a song last year for Connie Smith called 'Burning a Hole in My Pocket.' It represents the trend in Country, but to me it's just a song I would have written during pop music days."

It is becoming fashionable in the trade to eschew such terms as pop-country, town and country, and contemporary-country, presumably because no two people agree on what they mean. A year ago the use of hyphenated hybrids had more validity, if only to distinguish Hollywood's country sound from that of Nashville, at least until Music City caught up. Now both cities have finally got it together: lyrics are a little more generalized—no "clouded blue haze" but neither are there such lines as "I would send you roses but they cost too much so I'm sending daffodils." Arrangements are plush, make full use of strings, horns, and vocal backing and seldom rely solely on standard chord progressions. Percussion is pronounced but rhythm patterns within a 4/4 or 3/4 structure are often more complex than those favored in Nashville. The result is a blend of pop and country which has brought down on Hollywood the wrath of country purists and simultaneously made a great deal of money for Jimmie Webb, John Hartford, and Glen Campbell.

Webb, still in his twenties, has probably turned out more pop and pop-country songs that have sold more single records in a shorter period of time than anybody, anywhere. He wrote "Up Up And Away" two years ago for the Fifth Dimension, later sold it to TWA for a substantial six figure sum, and then came up with "MacArthur Park" (for Richard Harris). This was followed by a string of amazingly successful hits for Glen Campbell: "By The Time I Get To Phoenix," "Wichita Lineman," and "Galveston," all million-plus sellers. Though primarily a pop writer, he has almost single-handedly created a kind of suburban country sound.

Like Webb, John Hartford has been closely associated with Glen Campbell's success. A first rate Nashville studio musician (guitar, banjo and fiddle), he was already recording his own songs when he wrote "Gentle On My Mind" in 1967. A single release of the song was doing moderately well in the Country field when Campbell put out his own version which quickly sold over a million. Both artists prospered. Campbell became a super-star with his own network show and Hartford moved to Hollywood as a writer-performer with the Smothers Brothers. He now appears regularly on Campbell's program, and, among other things, collects song royalties from "Gentle" recordings done by 183 artists to date.

HARTFORD recorded his first five albums in Nashville and has recently completed his sixth in Hollywood. He admits to a preference for West Coast production

"I had a fight on my hands in Nashville. I was constantly being told to 'be careful you don't turn off that country audience...' They didn't want me putting anything on a record that might not be aired on a country station. . . . I guess there was a certain amount of compromise on the first few albums, but then it got less and less."

"Out here on the Coast you have a bigger palette to work with, because you can get people who can give you a strictly Nashville sound if you want it. But they can also digress with you if you want. You have some of the best arrangers and horn and string people in the world to work with."

At 31, Hartford is a comfortable amalgam of two cultures. His boots, rust brown leather pants and matching jacket are Laurel Canyon ranchy, yet when he speaks, the words start deep down in his throat and come chugging up past a magic twanger of an Adam's apple to emerge with marvelous resonance and the springiness of a new buggy whip. A full mane of dark hair covers ears formerly much in evidence on the record sleeves of early albums (Don't turn off, etc.) Long hair gives his angular face a darker, more interesting look. Still fond of Nashville, he has probably hung around too long with the brothers Smothers and their chief writer Mason Williams (L.A.'s answer to Renaissance man) to ever live there again.

In his early teens Hartford played fiddle at square dances, but later "during the Blue Suede Shoe years," played rock guitar in honky tonks around East St Louis and west Memphis.

"That was before you could get those slinky strings on your git-tar and we'd have to tune them way down low so you could push them half way off the neck. Either that or put on all E and B strings."

The apprenticeship helped him develop a balanced outlook: "There's a lot of fantastically real country music and there's a lot of bullshit."

While retaining his love for the former, Hartford got a degree in commercial art from Washington University (Missouri), then worked as a sign painter, Mississippi River deck hand, railroader and country DJ before he eventually crashed Nashville in 1965 to earn the dual distinction of being an A Team picker and the town hippie ("It was considered *in* to not understand me").

Having a liberal stance invited comparisons.

"Even though rock groups on the West Coast are very much into the bluegrass thing, there's a great difference in attitude. The Byrds' *Sweetheart of the Rodeo* is really liberal-left country music, both lyrically and in the way it's presented. It's very different



Glen Campbell

from the same type of music put out by someone like Ferlin Husky or Bobby Lord.... I tend to like the stuff the rock groups are doing because they're creative and original, and that's something I'm very much into."

Along parallel lines a conservative approach to maintaining the Nashville sound could eventually backfire: "Nashville's got their one-sized string section, they've got two or three vocal background groups that work all the sessions, and they have some really fine sidemen, but the same guys are playing the same sessions all the time. And after a while there's a sameness to it. It's just too much.... You've got to mix people around. And now they're putting vocal groups behind everything. The big word down there is *commercial*. . . . I wouldn't be so backed off about it if I didn't love country music."

"I think, actually, the reason I left Nashville was I wanted more freedom—although I understand at the time I had as much or more freedom than anybody. But it's a relative thing. I wouldn't mind going back to record. They do have some incredible studios and some of the best guitar and banjo players in the world—more so than out here.... Matter of fact it might not be such a bad idea to do tracks back there and if you're going to do any sweetenin', do it on the Coast."

"Sweetenin'" has been around Nashville from the start, but somehow the idea of recording a solo voice and accompanying guitar and rhythm one day and then dubbing in a 30-piece ensemble with voices the next ran against the grain of country music. But Glen Campbell changed all that. Two years ago, working with Capitol producer Al DeLory, he developed an obviously successful approach to country music:

"For me to get the feel I want on a record it would be pretty hard to go into a studio with a 21 piece band and get it all to sound solid. So on rhythm dates I only do bass, drums, guitar, overdub the guitar, overdub whatever, and get the feel like I want, and the voice like I want it, and then Al overdubs the strings, the horns, or whatever."

EXENSIVE overdubbing is basic to pop music, but what Campbell did was to use it to package "Gentle On My Mind" while preserving an identifiable country feeling. The combination was an enormous success, and has been sustained by Nashville, Jimmy Webb's songs, and Campbell's extraordinary popularity.

The hard part for Campbell was reaching the point where he had the flexibility to develop that combination. When he signed with Capitol in 1962, he was already an established studio musician and singer, but no one was sure what to do about it.

"I bounced around four or five producers before I said, 'But you don't understand, that's not what I want to do.' When you go with a company like Capitol you tend to go along with what they say. No one ever seemed to ask me what I wanted to do. Finally, I worked out an arrangement with Al DeLory where I could do a couple of songs of my own on each session.... And if he wanted me to cut "Come To Jesus" in A Flat, I'd do it as long as I could get my lick in. It's worked out great so far."

Campbell finished up 1968 as the nation's top selling artist, outdistancing the Beatles by a comfortable margin. His last four albums have sold over a million copies. Last December alone he accounted for over 4.5 million in LP sales. He picked up four Grammy awards, was named the Entertainer of the Year by Nashville's Country Music Association, and somehow ended up as the honorary chairman of the National Arthritis Foundation. Last month in Hollywood the Academy of Country and Western Music named him the Best Male Vocalist of the Year and Top Television Personality, and presented him with an award for the Best Album (*Bobbie Gentry/Glen Campbell*).

This year will produce more of the same: television, movies, awards, state fairs, appearances, records, concerts, and a personal gross of around \$3 million. His back would have you believe he's still just a nice kid from Delight, Arkansas (pop. 450) who learned to pick and sing on a Sears Roebuck guitar at the age of six, all of which is true.

Campbell grew up in Arkansas, absorbed the manners and mores of rural life, emerging unaffected by racial prejudice. At 15 he decided to swap an uncertain future in school for a chance to play in his uncle's country-western band in Albuquerque, New Mexico. For the next eight years he toured the Southwest, playing country bars six nights a week, five hours a night.

By 1960 he had a wife, his own band (The Champs) and was blowing more rock than country. Moving to Hollywood that same year, he played with several L.A.-based rock groups before starting work as a studio musician.

"I really got into studio playing in 1962 when I discovered I could make more doing that than running around trying to be a singin' star."

When he wasn't working studio dates (which at one point earned him \$50,000 a year) Campbell did one night stands at both rock and country music shows up and down the Coast.

"I must have played arenas like the Cow Palace [San Francisco] three or four times. The bill was 'Chubby Checker, Sonny and Cher, the Byrds, and Many Others.' I was Many Others. That was back when I was doing *Shindig*. I did a lot of rock and roll on that show, everything from 'What's New Pussycat' to 'Cumberland Gap'."

Campbell's appearances on *Shindig* may have been less memorable than that show's commercials for Stride medicated purple pads, but on the other hand he had worked all the Beach Boy studio dates, knew their entire repertoire, and at one point substituted for an ailing Brian Wilson at a Houston concert. When Wilson subsequently had to bow out of a six-month tour in 1965, Campbell again took his place. In addition to raising his voice a tone and a half (from singing falsetto four nights a week) the tour was rewarding.

"I learned an awful lot about people. It showed me another side of the world I hadn't seen... I was actually a teen-age idol, so to speak. You know, I lost three or four shirts, and a couple wrist watches, I didn't know not to wear 'em. 'Cuz when you're running from the stage, they can really grab."

"Mike [Love] and the gang, they wanted me to go with them full time after that. I thought about it and decided I really didn't want to be a part of a group I like being responsible for me... They didn't want to pay me what I wanted, but that's beside the point. It's like, 'The Beach Boys did so and so,' or 'Such and such a group done so and so.' I like to be me, not part of something that does something that, say, I wouldn't like, and then have it printed."

The decision was fortuitous. Campbell's mellifluous voice was ideally suited to a country lyric at a time when Jimmy Webb was changing the character of that lyric.

"Webb's stuff is a little bit country. But it's like Hartford says, they have quit writin' about 'You broke my heart so now I'm gonna break your jaw' or 'You left me and now I'm gonna go down to the bar and put a nickel in the juke box and play A-ll.' That's really one of the big reasons for the upsurge in country music."

"Actually I don't like to segregate music. To me it's like segregatin' people... People who say 'That's Country and I don't like Country' gotta be pretty narrow minded. Either that or they don't know a damn thing about music. I don't like country music—that's the dumbest remark I ever heard. Then you start naming off some country songs and they say 'Is that Country?' I didn't know that.' There's good in all music. It's like when I record, I don't aim at anything. I just find a good song and go do it like I want to. And if the country fans gripe or the pop fans gripe, I can't help it."

Glen Campbell can't help it either if a good percentage of his public sees him as something more than an entertainer. In these troubled times he has become for many the embodiment of those vanishing virtues tilled from the rich soil of the American earth. To them he is attractive, manly, self-effacing, honest, easy-going, inner-directed and successful. Happily his private personality parallels his public image.

KEN NELSON—Capitol's A&R chief who has headed that company's enormously profitable Country area—looks like an amiable Midwestern dry goods dealer. He wears open collar shirts in simple pastels, usually has his sleeves rolled up half way, smokes an occasional cigar, and doesn't pay any mind if his calf shows when he crosses his legs.

"I'm just a country boy m'self."

His is the smile of a man who hasn't been a country boy for 30 years but who does have over \$350,000 in retirement benefits coming to him when he decides to relinquish his role as probably the best Country producer in the business.



JOHN GRIFFIN

Nelson has a prestige office on the top floor of the Capitol building but it isn't papered over with the expected plaques, pictures, citations and reassuring memorabilia. In his world the accoutrements of success are irrelevant. He lives outside fashion, a consummate practitioner of his craft, strangely at peace, and a benign presence in Studio A.

Ten minutes after the evening session is scheduled to begin, people are surprisingly set up and ready. The expected 45 minute prelude of instrument tuning and kit rattling standardized by the Jefferson Airplane is supplanted instead by a stirring andante rendition of "Tracks Run Through the City." The Hagers—Jim and John—have come to make Record One. They finish "Tracks" and run through a second song, "With Lonely," then a third, "Going Home To Your Mother." All agree "Tracks" should be the A side. What about "Mother?" Nelson pauses.

"Well, it's a fine song and what it says may be true but it knocks somebody's mother. You may eventually want to put it on an album, but with your first single you probably shouldn't knock anybody.... But it's your show. If you feel strongly about it, go ahead and use it."

Jim Hager looks at 21 years of experience and suggests they cut "With Lonely." No objections heard, the twins again run through "Tracks" for the benefit of sidemen on bass, two guitars, pedal steel, drums and piano. The arrangement begins to come together as electric guitarist James Burton, replete in white turtleneck and matching "tennis," puts together a lead. Here and there a few licks bring to mind his presence on Judy Collins' *Who Knows Where The Time Goes*.

Five bars into the first take Nelson signals a halt. "Is everyone in tune? Thought I heard a B flat somewhere."

The B string on the acoustic guitar is brought up to pitch, followed by two full takes, a playback, a reshuffling of the arrangement to cut 15 seconds off the time, and then a final take.

By this time the Hagers have transmuted the anxiety of a first recording session into a totally concentrated effort to sing well. Both watch and listen intently as Nelson suggests minor changes in phrasing, in emphasis. They're damn good and they're hungry for that first record. Studio A has never been more efficiently used.

The character of this session—in fact of virtually all country music recording sessions—is significant only by comparison with the unstructured, sloppy and markedly unprofessional behavior of at least 50 percent of the rock groups who enter into a studio with the idea of making a record. A rock musician may only bring with him a fragmented vision of what he will eventually record (for him the studio is the instrument), but what is passed off as the machinations of the creative process is too often little more than an absurd indulgence of ego and a lack of technical competence, frequently manifested in the inability to put one's instrument properly in tune when the chips are down.

After a short break, during which Nelson explains to his charges the strictly commercial considerations of keeping singles short enough for use on radio stations and juke boxes, the session resumes in a relaxed

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NUDIE

BY JERRY HOPKINS

NORTH HOLLYWOOD—When rock went country, a former G-string manufacturer with the unlikely name of Nudie joined Johnny Cash and Buck Owens on the "underground" personality list. Nudie (that's as much of a name as he'll admit to) is the world's flashiest C&W stylist.

In fact, one might describe this 66-year-old New York born custom tailor as the Rudi Gerreich of the "Grand Ole Opry" set. Gerreich introduced the topless bathing suit and Nudie somehow has managed to convince nearly 25 years of rough and rugged cowboy types they should buy blue boots studded with costume jewelry and suits of magenta elastique dripping with rhinestoned fringe. The difference is, Nudie's customers wear what they buy in public.

"My impression of an entertainer is, he should wear a flashy outfit to be fair to the public," Nudie says. "He shouldn't be wearing a sport coat like the people in the audience. The costume is the first impression and it should be flashy."

Nudie says he developed this attitude when he was a youngster, shining shoes outside New York's Palace Theatre, the Carnegie Hall of the Vaudeville circuit.

"My costumes used to be called corny," Nudie says, adjusting a gold pinkie ring shaped like a saddle and studded with diamonds. "Now they call us mod. I don't care. Country music has took over rock and roll. Doesn't matter

to me who buys clothes. Whatever does the best."

Nudie was referring to a recent increase in the number of long-haired musicians trooping into his suburban store—the Flying Burrito Brothers, Monkee Mike Nesmith and the Rolling Stones among them. And on the basis of what these musicians purchased, they are no less fascinated by Nudie's imagination than the big C&W names are: Rolling Stone Keith Richard bought two pair of ruby encrusted boots, for example, and all the Burritos have specially designed Nudie suits. (Gram Parsons' jacket is decorated with embroidered marijuana plants and acid caps.)

Custom outfits at Nudie's Rodeo Tailors begin at \$95 (that'll get you a nice,

but rather ordinary suit) and according to the boss-man, run all the way up to \$15,000—although he says he has no real idea what you might get for that. He says the highest price-tag on anything he's made was \$10,000, for Elvis Presley's famous gold lame tuxedo.

Nudie also custom-tailors automobiles—a sideline almost as old as his costume trade and prompted by his customizing his own cars—and just as Nudie's clothing styles outdistance anything else sartorial, the cars makes nearly anything ever seen at a custom car show pale and uncluttered by comparison. Currently he has two white Pontiac convertibles, each one splattered with neon peacock feathers in leather and metal work.

The interior of each is lined with hand-tooled leather and encrusted with 540 silver dollars. There is a saddle between the bucket seats. The door handles, arm rests and shift stick are chromed six-

shooters. (Pull the trigger and the car changes gears.) Rifles are mounted on the rear of the car, one on each fender, another on the trunk lid, and derringers work the emergency brake and directional lights. (There are 14 guns in all.) There's a horseshoe on the brake pedal. On the front bumper is a pair of giant horns from a sacrificial bull. And the white leather boot covering the top when it's down is a scrawl with the signatures of some of Nudie's more famous customers.

Nudie says he has two of these cars in case one is in the garage (having the triggers checked?) when he gets one of his frequent calls to drive the car in a parade.

Today, Nudie is a showman, spectacular in appearance and success, but it wasn't always thus. Before discovering his true calling—turning grown men into neon peacocks—he failed at nearly everything he tried.

Nudie is a Brooklyn cowboy, a graduate of P.S. 156, and for a while, he says, after he'd abandoned his shoeshine racket at the corner of 47th and Broad-

way, he was "Battling Nudie," an unsuccessful boxer fighting for as little as a dollar a bout.

He then learned the rudiments of tailoring in a cousin's shop, he says, but didn't stick with it long enough to make a decent income, let alone a name for himself, and went to Hollywood to work as an extra in silent movies. When that earned him even less money and recognition, he worked his way back to New York, where he began to make "specialty costumes" (G-strings and pasties) for the burlesque queens. Burlesque died and so did Nudie.

"Dear Friends," is the way he begins a letter in his mail order catalog. "I am Nudie, the Tailor, and my custom is fine clothing for countless Western stars, Sunday riders, dudes and honest-to-goodness wranglers, cowpokes and rodeo folks.

"I'd be real pleased to meet you and suit you with the same personal attention I give every day to many wonderful people.

"It makes me real proud to have these folks come to my place out here in San Fernando Valley for outfitting with distinctive creations, and once you have visited me or become acquainted with Nudie's through the mail, I'm sure you'll see why everyone always comes back."

"Every fan of Western horsemanship, whether interested professionally or for

pleasure, always will find a warm Western welcome at Nudie's."

"Sincerely, Nudie"

That's Nudie. (Sincerely.) His family works with him in the store; daughter works in accounting, son-in-law does most of the designing, wife waits on customers. On the walls is a vast collection of framed photographs showing Nudie smiling with his famous customers, and in a back room is Nudie's private collection—pictures of Marilyn Monroe with her snatch showing and Sophia Loren with her nipples showing and Joan Crawford with everything showing and a huge framed photograph of Lili St Cyr (a friend from the old days) that has Lili's handwriting in one corner that says "To Nudie, If I ever wear clothes, they'll be yours. Always, Lili St Cyr."

Nudie is a life member of the Country Music Association and he walks with a rolling cowboy gait, grinning at you from behind tinted (green) shades and there's still some Brooklyn in his voice.

"You don't have to have cows to be a cowboy," he says.

but purposeful mood. The group tackles "With Lonely" in several keys, settles for G, and completes a final take ten minutes short of the three hour mark. Everyone is pleased. The Hagers, potentially hot property, now have Record One.

For Nelson the session wasn't much different from the studio work he originally did in the basement of Nashville's Tulane Hotel in 1948. At the time, however, production was only half the job. Finding the talent took up the rest of his time.

"I remember when I used to spend weeks driving all over the Midwest and the South scouting talent. I never ran into any miraculous performers but I did get a good feel for country music and what people wanted to hear."

Nelson's judgment has been reliable. Since he took over the job from his predecessor Lee Gillette in 1950, he no longer cruises the boondocks. Between 40 and 50 demo records and tapes come into his office every month from three continents.

"Still, the record business today is no sure thing. A hit single sells between 25,000 and 50,000. Of course if it crosses over into the pop field it can go up to 200,000 or higher."

While 50,000 records sold is very good by today's standards, the figure is small by historical comparison. In the early Fifties, country boys like Hank Thompson and Eddy Arnold sold 500-600,000 records at a crack without going pop, primarily because only a few companies were turning out country records and these tended to be concentrated among relatively few artists. Ironically, the half-million sales mark for a strictly country record is a rarity today even though the audience is considerably larger.

According to Nelson the present decline is in part due to the buying public's shift from singles to long-playing albums. Twenty years ago 78 rpm records were the industry's staple commodity. Today the country fan more often waits for an LP release the title cut of which is a hit single. In other words, if you buy Carl Smith's latest Columbia release featuring his recent hit "Faded Love and Winter Roses," you also get to hear "I Put the Blue in Her Eyes," "I Wish I Felt This Way at Home," and "Not In Front of the Kids."

If the LP buying trend continues at the present rate, 45 rpm singles within a matter of several years will be used almost exclusively as promotional devices for radio station air play. Such a development could easily make a Program Director's job a long term nightmare but the changing nature of country music is already playing havoc in radioland, particularly in metropolitan areas. As middle-of-the-road and chicken-rock stations in Los Angeles, Fresno and San Jose pick up on the so-called town-and-country sound (Glen Campbell, Eddy Arnold and Hartford), the straight-out country stations are being forced to shift to more narrowly ethnic programming (i.e., bard core country) to keep their audience and their advertisers.

THE PROBLEM is transitional, however. The country audience in California growing and the stations serving it are starting to scramble for the ratings with the ardor of the more hyperbolic rockers. Promotion of country acts is increasingly important, but unlike Top 40, few country outlets are able to scare up a full house on their own. In the Los Angeles area, which receives as many as 45 AM-FM signals, country stations KFOX and KBBQ team together to cross-promote such attractions as the Jimmy Dean Show. In the Bay Area KSAY in Oakland and KEEN in San Jose have adopted the same practice.

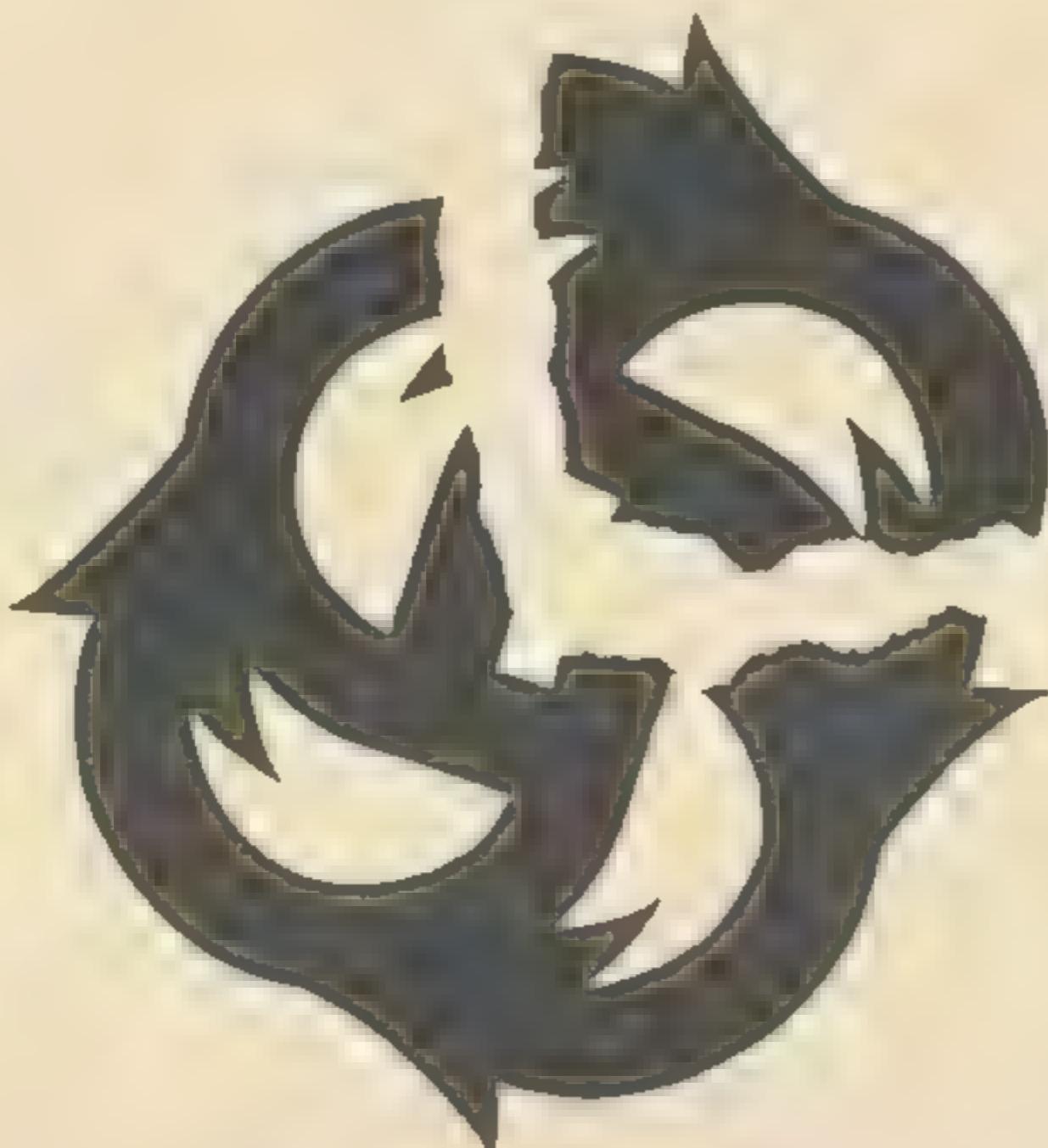
—Continued on Page 24

Nelson

Hager

BARON WOLMAN





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time, possibly not even since
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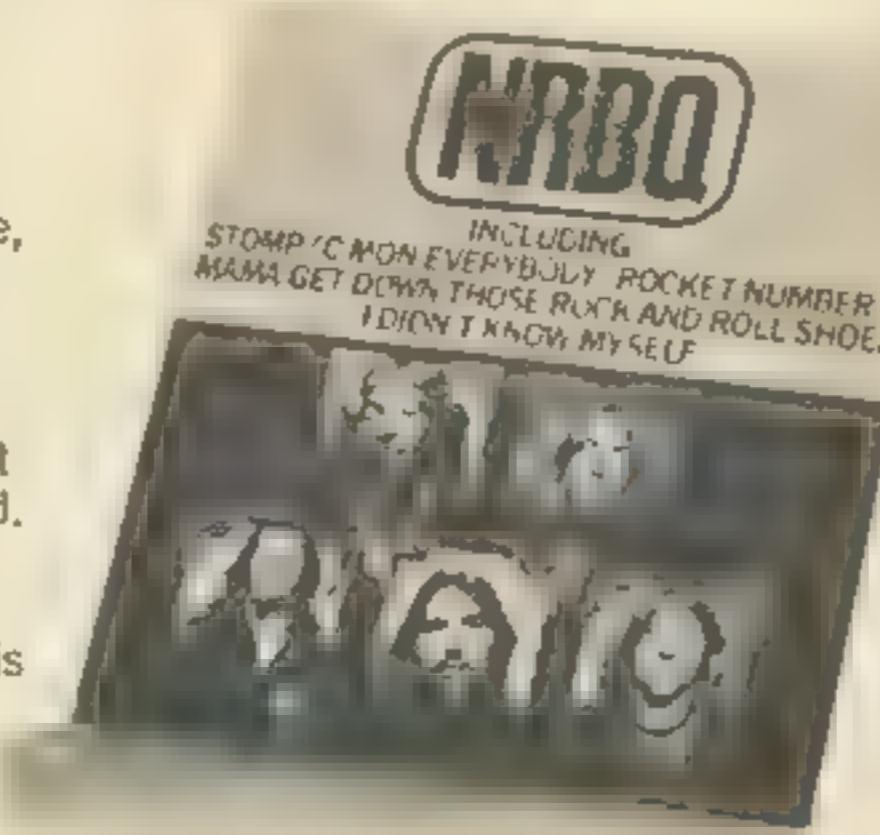
"There is a group called NRBQ which I saw in late November or early December. They really knocked me out... really.

"They are the first group since the early Beatles to capture that simple, driving, joyous rock and roll.

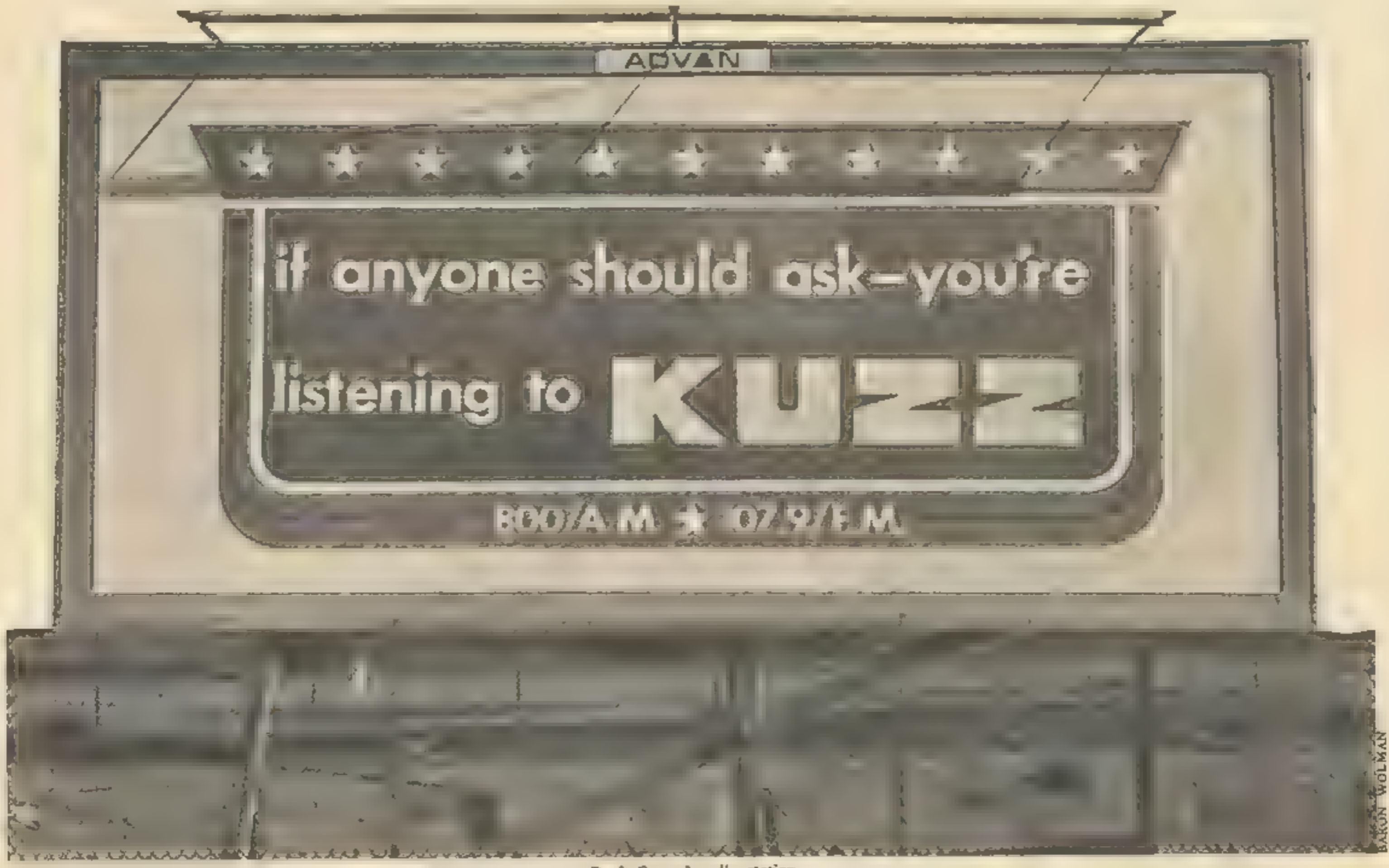
"When they played their week at The Scene, I was there almost every night, wanting to scream and almost crying because I'm not in a rock band. This is how the early Beatles came across. They made everyone want to be behind those microphones. This is important and exciting, and they may become the most important group around. NRBQ. They are one of the best and certainly the most exciting."

—Mike Jahn, New York Scenes

We just want to add our "Amen" to that.



NRBQ on Columbia Records



Buck Owens' radio station

One station which has no problem packing the concert all on its own is KRAK in Sacramento, 100 miles north of San Francisco. With a 50,000 watt signal easily covering Stockton, Modesto and the upper half of the San Joaquin Valley, KRAK is the biggest country music station in the western states. Owned by the Hercules Broadcasting Company, KRAK is the largest of a small national chain which includes KKUA (690 AM) in Honolulu, a rocker which calls its DJ's The Big 69 men (you can get away with a lot in Hawaii). KRAK's studios are buried in the Country Club Shopping Center, a mammoth retail complex which looks a little like the box in which Disneyland came.

While its audience is largely rural, the station can afford to buy quarter page ads in the Wall Street Journal on a regular basis. One reason is that few country acts can successfully appear in and around Sacramento without KRAK's promotional backing (for a percentage). To prove the point the station recently acquired a large auditorium in an expansion move to grab a bigger share of area bookings.

The man responsible for producing country shows is Jay Hoffer, KRAK's program director. A thin, flat-chested executive in his late forties, Hoffer has clean, white hands, fastidiously neat desk and a philosophy of Americanism which conceivably would allow him to offer the use of the station's auditorium for a decency rally, for a percentage of the take. Having read about the groupies over lunch, Hoffer subsequently complained of objectionable language and advised ROLLING STONE that "KRAK does not wish to be associated in any way with your magazine." He kept the issue.

In this spirit Hoffer has been careful to keep KRAK's programming traditional (no rockabilly) with a heavy stress on corn ("Now here's Freddy Hart with a streetsweeper's song for after the horse parade: 'Why Leave Something I Can't Use'"). Pee-pee-doo-doo again. KRAK's audience without doubt comprises the world's largest market for a commercial for ear wax softener offering a free ear trumpet ("TV listening device") with every bottle purchased.

Despite the domination of a large country audience, KRAK is a relative newcomer. During the war the thousands of shipyard and defense plant workers who had migrated from the Midwest to the San Francisco Bay area constituted a substantial market for country music. It was discovered—or rather stumbled upon—by DJ Cliff Johnson at KLX (now KNEW). Johnson, whose radio name was Cactus Jack, had always hated country music but that was before he was ordered to play it. Wally King, a contemporary of Johnson's (and since 1944 a newscaster with KSFO) recalls what happened:

"KLX's manager Ad Fried called all the staff announcers together (we weren't called DJ's then) and said 'I know you all hate the music but one of you guys is going to have to do a Western show—I don't care who does it.' The field narrowed down to a choice between me, Johnson and a third announcer, Everett Clayborne. Finally Clayborne and I ganged up on Johnson and two days later 'Cactus Jack' started playing Western stuff off tapes from World Transcription Service (you couldn't get records because of the war shortage) and the few country-western records we had around the station."

"Cactus also worked a shift as a foreman at the Kaiser shipyard in Richmond where he met a lot of people from Oklahoma, Texas and Arkansas who kept asking him to play records by Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys. He'd never heard of him but they all insisted Wills was their little tin Jesus back there in the Southwest. One of his crew loaned him a cardboard box of Wills records to play and pretty soon the station was deluged with requests for more. Cactus asked his 'friends and neighbors' to send in Wills records and pretty soon he had a large collection. Then he got hooked on the stuff—you know, you listen to anything long enough and you get to like it."

When Wills himself heard about the response his records were receiving, he hooked up with Cactus for promotion and sold out the Oakland Civic Auditorium for a one-night Western Swing barn dance (there were no concerts in those days). Every few months for the next several years Wills (with Cactus as MC) appeared somewhere in the area, often outdrawing the Dorsey, Miller and Goodman bands.

Shortly after Cactus Jack uncovered the C&W audience, rival station KROW (now KABL) came up with Longhorn Joe (alias Wally Elliott) who managed to split the ratings. He, too, got into promotion and brought in Hank Williams, T Texas Tyler, Hank Snow and, later on, the first Johnny Cash show.

By the early Fifties a third cowboy—DJ performer Blackjack Wayne (and his Country Ramblers)—had developed a local following. Wayne, who had been functioning as a country DJ on outlying stations, took Longhorn's spot when the latter left KROW, but by that time Western Swing had ridden off into the sunset and the country audience had shrunk considerably.

Today the largest audience for occasional-country are the 200,000 listeners to KSFO's immensely popular Don Sherwood. Roughly 20 percent of the songs on his A.M. commuter program are hefty-meaty-beefy trucker ballads and he-haw novelty numbers. Sherwood is in the enviable position of being able to play whatever material he happens to like regardless of whether the local country listener wants to hear it or not.

In any event, what a Country fan wants to hear is unclear, but as John Hartford's experience with "Gentle On My Mind" indicates, the character of the

artist's voice often has the strongest bearing on a record's success. Hartford's trouble may be that he's too good. In country music, as in no other category, a voice that oozes sincerity and emotion is the most important requisite. Cliffie Stone explains,

"There's an honesty to it. In fact if I get a country artist who's got a good voice I'm in trouble. It's gotta come from the heart. And if you listen to Buck Owens and Merle Haggard and Sonny James and all the others who really feel what they sing, you'll find an emotionalism that sells. It's not the fantastic voice. It's not the beautiful sound. It's that thing you can believe."

If a good voice lacks sincerity, one with a clear vibrato is downright dishonest. Historically, the emphasis is valid. Moreover, anything short of that would make a shambles of "You May Be Wild Bill Tonight But You'll Be Sweet William in the Morning."

Most country singers have, at one time or another, sung hillbilly, blue grass, folk, pop and even rock. Conway Twitty, Marty Robbins and Ferlin Husky all had pop hits during the Fifties. Jerry Lee Lewis spent a decade in rock before turning to Country. Of lesser importance was the brief rock career of Corky Jones, a young Bakersfield artist who in 1953 recorded "Hot Dog," a single which sold well locally. He toyed with the idea of adopting the Chuck Berry style and might even have cut "Johnny B. Goode" but he eventually decided to stick with country music.

Buck Owens never regretted the choice.

HE DRIVE FROM Los Angeles to Bakersfield 100 miles north is a fast two hours on Highway 99. The road rises to the lip of a teaming metropolitan bowl, over the lip and out of the smog, and into the barren Tehachapi Mountains. It winds through the top of 4,000 foot El Tejon Pass, then drops to the floor of the lower San Joaquin Valley down the Grapevine—a steep 14-mile grade populated day and night by huge diesel trucks grinding their way southward to the summit. On the valley floor gusts of hot, dry air spill onto the road from limitless flat farmlands.

Bakersfield does not have a skyline. The city arrives in the form of several exits from a 70 mph by-pass. Downtown is an area of two and three-story buildings, surrounded by a sprawling patchwork of shopping centers, ranch style homes and asphalt streets flanked by service stations, tractor dealerships and drive-ins. A good number of its 60,000 citizens live off the nearby oil fields or the farmlands comprising the bulk of Kern County. The place is a dead ringer for Western Oklahoma: windmills, alfalfa, oil fields, humidity, horse flies, even a Republican congressman. Buck Owens doesn't own Bakersfield, yet, but if he has his way the town will be called Music City West in a year's time.

Hays Motors at 1805 South Chester Avenue is a small, tired used car lot and garage that isn't breaking any sales records. There's usually a few good old boys sitting inside the office passing time with manager Bill Woods, a stocky easy-going type who plays country-rock piano six nights a week at the Barrel House up-town. Woods' dual vocation is well suited to his leisure

—Continued on Page 26



Bakersfield



Bill Woods



THE BUCK OWENS PORTFOLIO

CAREER EQUITY:

- a. Every 45 rpm released since 1963 (21 to date) has made No. 1 on the Country charts.
- b. Total record sales to date (single and LP) exceeds eight million.
- c. Minimum personal appearance fee: \$6,000 a night. Total concert dates in 1968: 112.

TANGIBLE ASSETS:

1. In 1965 Owens and personal manager McFadden set up OMAC Artists Corporation (an acronym from the two names), a West Coast booking agency (Bakersfield). Today it is the third largest Country agency in the nation with 21 acts, including Merle Haggard and the Strangers.

2. Owens is the principal stockholder of Thunderbird Broadcasting and Chaparral Broadcasting, two Bakersfield corporations which control KUZZ-AM and KBBY FM respectively. Of 14 radio stations in the area, KUZZ runs a profitable No. 2 in ratings. In Phoenix, Arizona, Owens also owns Buck Owens Broadcasting (KTUF-AM — the top Country station) and Aztec Broadcasting Corporation (KNIX-FM).

3. From Oklahoma's WHY-TV Owens each season tapes the Buck Owens TV Ranch Show—a half hour color program syndicated to independent stations in 18 primary markets and nearly the same number in secondary areas.

4. He owns Blue Book Publishing Company with offices in Bakersfield and Los Angeles.

5. CBS has named him to host *Hee Haw* (a C&W *Laugh-In* from Nashville) replacing the Smothers Brothers Show. A minimum of 12 shows will be taped for summer airing with a possible permanent slot tentatively slated for January 1970.

6. Owens recently created:

- a. Performance Management Inc. a personal management agency to handle new talent as well as a good chunk of artists already on the OMAC roster.
- b. Blue Book Records—a new label to go hand in hand with the construction of:
- c. Buck Owens Studios—a soon-to-be-converted Bakersfield theatre which will start off with a 16 track console (convertible to 24),

two 30'x65' studios and a Moog synthesizer.

7. Owens controls Buck Owens Enterprises, a personal business corporation which among other things puts out the Buck Owens fan magazine *All American*, the Buck Owens Guitar Method Course (45 rpm instruction record included), and the Buck Owens Chord Book.

8. Aside from music and media, he owns a fledgling chain of drive-ins called Buck O's, four of which have been installed with more to come, plus . . .

9. Sizable holdings in cattle ranches: two along the West Coast near Pako Robles (managed by his father), a third near Bakersfield, and a fourth spread outside of Phoenix, Geeminy!

life loves: country music and stock car racing. The wall behind the office door is papered with a fading collage of dusty publicity photographs of country stars of the dim past, several business cards discolored with age, and an old pin-up calendar from an automotive supplier. On the cluttered desk is a stack of Grand Ole Opry brochures (c. 1955) with pictures of features artists (Johnny Cash, looking like a sax player for the Wailers, is described as "a new member who sings and writes songs as well.")

Bill figures he knows about as much about Buck Owens in the early days as anybody.

Back in the early Fifties I owned a club here called the Bill Woods Corral. Buck started out with my band playing take-off guitar. He was pretty good, even then. I called us "Bill Woods and the Orange Blossom Playboys" featuring Buck Owens. Actually, you see, he didn't like to sing, but I encouraged him . . . I had to force him to."

Woods pauses to tuck his shirt between a beer belly and a silver belt buckle.

"Buck stayed with me for about five years, even after I went over to another club—The Blackboard. Though we were a country-western band, we always played about 75 percent rock in clubs. Still do. That's why I'll put Buck up against any R&B or rock singer you ever heard, singing the same stuff."

Mercifully, Buck Owens chose country over R&B. He had more in common with Lefty Frizzell and Spade Cooley. Born in Sherman, Texas, in 1930, Owens grew up in Mesa, Arizona, got married at 16 and five years later moved to Bakersfield. There he worked as an Orange Blossom Playboy and starved along with most every other country musician except Ferlin Husky and Tommy Collins—two Bakersfield stars of the Fifties who developed a national following in that decade. About the same time the Owenses were amicably divorced. Ex-wife Bonole Owens began her own career as a country singer and two years ago married Merle Haggard.

Woods was up on all the goings-on of the day: "Ferlin Husky used to play in Tommy Collins' band. Then Buck took his place and changed the style a bit. He'd been singing and writing for a few years by that time and he first became known for 'Sweethearts in Heaven' and 'Down on the Corner of Love,' both which he recorded on the Pep label before owner Claude Caviness sold out to Ray Price in Nashville."

Owens' real break came in 1957 when he recorded his first album for Capitol. He left Bakersfield, traveled north to Washington and plugged the country club circuit, playing for whatever he could get at the door. After several records began to move, Owens moved back to California where he began operating out of Bakersfield and cutting more records with Ken Nelson at Capitol.

By the early Sixties, Owens had put together the Buckaroos, a solid back-up group (drums, pedal steel and two guitars) led by Don Rich, a lead guitarist who doubled with close harmony on vocals. In 1963 Owens met Jack McFadden, radio advertising manager for Sacramento's KRAK, and took him on as his personal manager. Soon after Buck Owens and his Buckaroos became big time. His career total in records sales to date exceeds eight million.

What Buck Owens puts on those records is a flexible tenor voice (straight from the heart, naturally), his own imaginative songs and tight, clean arrangements with a lot of good picking and jumpy percussion. Its character differs from Nashville in its relative sparseness, and lacks the depth provided by the normal studio complement of six to eight musicians. But the result is a crisp and distinctive sound which rings true to the country ear. All this happens 100 miles north of Hollywood.

Today at 39 Owens prays he has played his last club date in a buckets-of-blood saloons and shikker bars. With a \$6,000 a night price tag he can relax. The new approach is one-nighters.

"Most of the time the crowds are good just about ever-place. But of course California is awful good. It's the economics. The working people got more per capita income and more livin' margin. So I would say they rank with the best of them."

About the country orientation in pop music:

"I think it's something new to them. The rock-pop set is searching for a different sound, some simplicity, and country music has it. . . . But on the other hand country-western is changing, too. . . . Now I recently had a record out that's a good example ['Who's Gonna Mow Your Grass']. It's got drums and a bass passing tone, some couple inner parts there and it has the fuzz tone for the lead part. Now we've found only one country-western disc jockey that didn't like it. All the other jocks were flipped out about it. In addition to that Top 40 stations in Seattle, Portland, Dallas, Oklahoma City, and Des Moines played it. So you can see there's a definite fusion taking place. . . . The music as a whole is getting to sound more alike. The country-western artists are getting to where they sound more like today's pop-rock music."

Owens' latest single, "Johnny B. Goode," recorded live at the London Palladium, is straight out rock and has already broken into the pop charts.

What is happening to Country lyrics?

"The story song seems to be getting less and less and the modern lyric more popular. Like, gee, you know, I have some radio stations in Bakersfield. One on AM plays country-western and the other plays rockin'-sockum type music on FM. You know, the underground sound. We play a lot of acid thangs. The

only problem is that while the underground station pulls a good four or five rating none of the merchants will buy advertising. And let's face it, that's the name of the game. It's the economics."

It's the house hippie problem all over again:

"A while ago the gang told me one of the announcers was on marijuana so we had to get rid of him. You know, that kind of person can put the whole situation in a bad light. The music attracts the ten percent of the undesirables, the ones with the outlook of, 'Gee, I'd rather take a dive than punch that eight to five,' you know."

Owens tells of another incident at one of his Phoenix rockers. A gaggle of micro-boppers set fire to a trash can to distract the security guard while they crashed the studio to reach the resident jock.

Leaning forward with sincere disapproval: ". . . Look, I'll be frank with you—I'm filthy rich. I don't have to put up with that kind of stuff."

Buck Owens is correct on both counts. As an enterprise he is a poor man's Gene Autry (see box) with the personal drive to maintain an extraordinarily fast pace. Beneath his preoccupation with markets and ratings and "the economics" he's enjoying himself immensely. So is the better part of the Owens-McFadden clan.

The Bakersfield headquarters of Buck Owens' operations—principally OMAC Artists Corporation—is a plain-looking one-story office building on North Chester Street away from the center of town. It has the look of a formerly well ordered business which suddenly expanded and had to find new space for Owens' son Mike (director of national promotion), Owens' sister Dorothy (Buck Owens Enterprises), his mother (help on the fan magazine), manager McFadden's son Joe (director of talent) and Joe's ex-school pal Jim Vaughn (formerly an assistant at Sears' fashion department) who took a pay cut to join the staff as number two man with the personal management arm.

The staff of 25 is close knit, hard working, young and promotionally oriented. Last fall OMAC's publicity department came out with issue No. 1 of *The All American*, a slick 12 page fan magazine. Claiming an instant club membership of 10,000 (motor: "Buck's Continued Fame Is Our Aim"), the publication contains the usual narcissistic adulation and at one point reminds its readers that "this country is strong because of a steadfast belief in God and that all-American music is for 'All Americans.'"

Any remaining doubts about the claim are sure to be cleared up before the end of the year. Plans are already in the works for a parade through downtown Bakersfield on the day the ribbon is cut on the soon-to-be-constructed Buck Owens Studios. The city will be officially declared the country music capital of

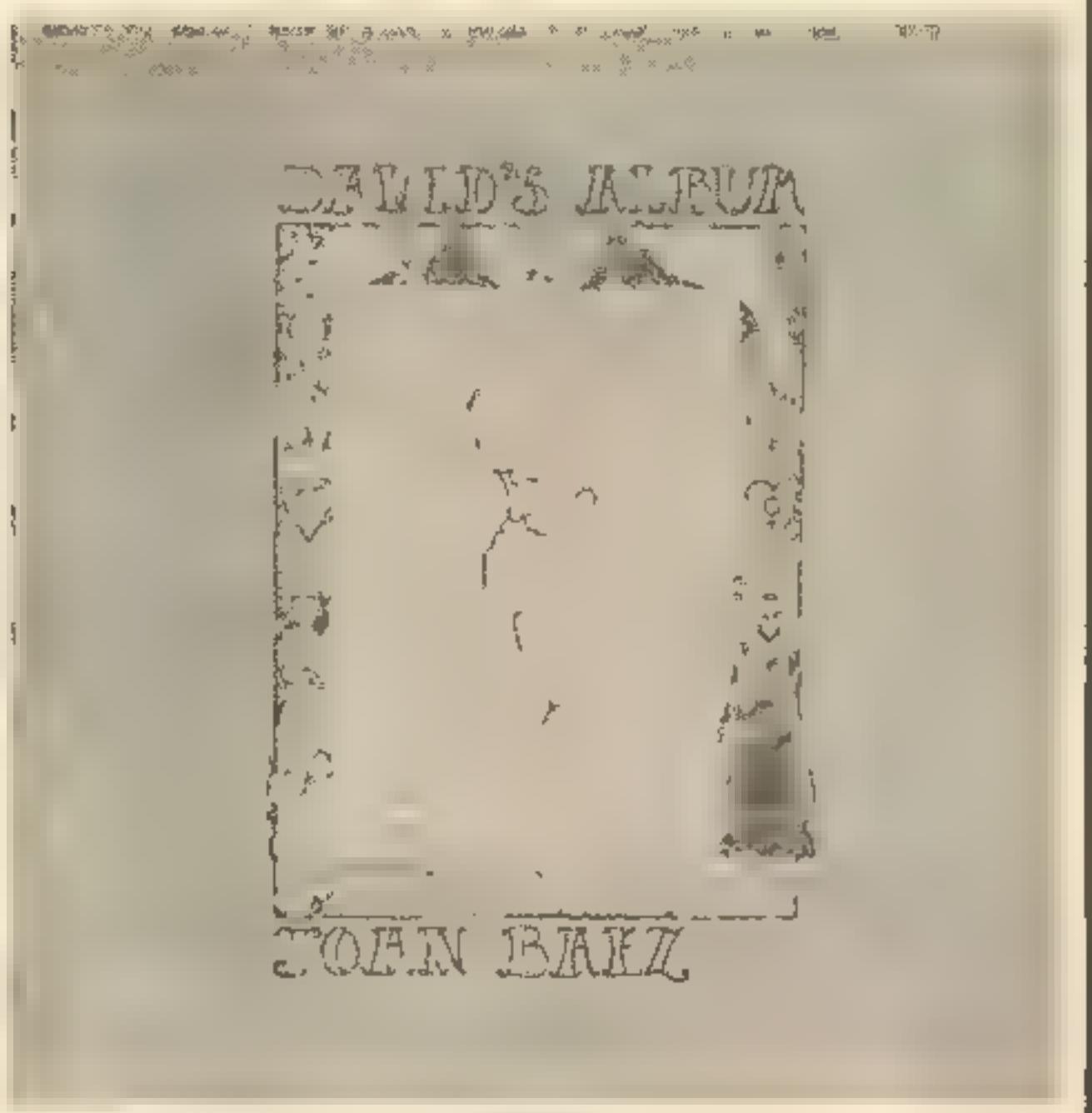
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Page 1.

New Albums on Vanguard.

Joan Baez



VANGUARD
RECORDINGS
FOR THE
CONNOISSEUR





Merle Haggard & The Strangers

the West and three dozen acts will appear throughout the day to prove it. Already invited to be present on the occasion: Governor Ronald Reagan and Vice President Spiro Agnew.

The Bakersfield hype is not all that fanciful. An eight-track recording studio is already in operation on Merle Haggard's ranch. It was originally installed for his personal use, but Haggard, along with manager Fuzzy Owen, plans to resurrect the inactive Tally label in Bakersfield and open the studio for commercial use. If two recording operations can do a brisk business additional facilities may be installed by one or more major labels. Then the ball would be rolling.

As for promoting country music and Bakersfield, Haggard speaks with characteristic frankness:

"Any time you build country music you build yourself if you're involved. Right now I just cut records, but I'm interested in recording in other areas besides my own. As for promoting a town, I'm not really interested in that. Whatever I do that helps, well, I'm glad, but that's not really my intention, you dig what I mean?"

MERLE HAGGARD'S only connection with Buck Owens is that he married his ex-wife and books through OMAC. In several respects his career has paralleled Owens', but in character, style and attitude Merle Haggard is clearly a man apart.

His voice is sweet water on parched earth, conjuring vistas of undulating wheatfields, dark soil and the rolling hills of the American heartland. His songs have the unmistakable feel of Jimmie Rodgers' classic blue yodels. And he sings country music in a way that communicates a sense of universally felt experience.

Born in Bakersfield in 1937, Haggard was the third child of a Chacotah, Oklahoma, fiddler who two years earlier had come west to escape the dust bowl. Young Merle's father died when he was nine, making an already hard life harder. He stayed in Bakersfield until his middle teens, then took off for several years of wandering through Texas and the Southwest where he worked on farms, drove potato trucks, hitch-hiked, bobo-ed and, even did a stretch behind bars for something like car theft. Along the way he began to write and sing songs imbued with the authenticity of personal suffering and a sense of heritage instinctively grasped. Without knowing it he had embraced and enriched the legacy of Woody Guthrie.

Returning to Bakersfield in 1961, Haggard fell in with the local country artists and began playing at the Barrel House, the Blackboard and other Country clubs. Then in 1964, with the help of fellow musician Fuzzy Owen, he landed a recording contract with Capitol. Things happened quickly thereafter. Haggard took on Fuzzy Owen as his manager, hooked up with OMAC in 1965, put together a fine back-up group (the Strangers) in 1966 and married Bonnie Owens in 1967. By the end of last year he had made nine albums which had sold nearly three million copies, written over 100 songs, and been voted the Best Male Vocalist in the Country field by *Cash Box* and several other trade magazines.

Like Buck Owens, Merle Haggard and the Strangers rent out for \$6,000 a night. But Haggard is unique among country stars—he has a kind of "it-don't-make-no-difference" love for good country music. When he is home in Bakersfield, Haggard will occasionally wander into one of the clubs, borrow somebody's axe and sit on the edge of the stage,

off to one side, next to a scotch and water, and jam with whoever happens to be playing.

With the Strangers for backing, Haggard has not had to rely on Nashville. He could record in a storefront church in the middle of Harlem and probably come up with a country sound more authentic than Floyd Cramer, Grady Martin, the Anita Kerr Singers, and eight of the best echo chambers on 16th Avenue South could together produce in any three sessions. However, for convenience he prefers to use Ken Nelson and Studio A for production and wife Bonnie and rhythm guitarist Gene Price for vocal backing. This parallels Buck Owens' use of the Buckaroos—up to a point.

"The Strangers are similar to the Buckaroos in that we have the same instrumentation, but anytime you have different musicians, it's going to sound different. We have a few style licks that we've come up with that Buck didn't have—identity licks I call them."

Does he see Nashville getting into difficulty by putting it "identity licks" behind every artist?

"Well anytime you limit the staff to a certain number of people, it's bound to start sounding commercial. By limiting I mean having the same studio musicians playing on all the sessions. . . . But then again it seems to me that the artists who get the most hits out of Nashville—people like Johnny Cash—have their organizations. And that's why I'm interested in building up my own network here on the West Coast."

Like Cash, Haggard uses a bus for his U.S. and Canadian junkets, in this case a well equipped Greyhound "Challenger" with separate quarters for all ten members of the tour. Life is thus a little less hectic and between stops Haggard can catch up on such tasks as reading a movie script.

"Bonnie and I and the Strangers had a small part in *Killers Three* but I think they played it up a bit too much. We might take the script we're looking over now. It's already been offered to Glen Campbell and Elvis Presley. Somebody said Glen wanted \$400,000 to do it and Elvis wanted \$800,000. . . . And [chuckling] now they come to me. . . ."

About pop music's adaptation of country music?

"Well I think it's kinda like a fad. Rock and roll got strong for a while, and then the Beatles got strong. I wouldn't call them rock and roll. . . . don't really know what you'd call them. And maybe Country is just the next thing in line. Then again it could be gospel music. You never know."

It may be a fad but without question a growing audience wants to hear more country music these days than ever before. In mid-April Merle Haggard and the Strangers had a chance to play for that audience in Hollywood, only the appearance was overshadowed by other events. He gave the inaugural performance at the V.I.S.—a new and lavish country-western club bankrolled by Dick Clark, the nation's top teenie impresario (305 rock/pop concert bookings last year). Clark had bought the old Cinnamon Cinder, a used teen night club (remember Dick Dale and the Del Tones?) and privately advertised \$250 club memberships to Very Important Shitkickers in the Los Angeles area. Somebody was offended, a minor fuss ensued and Clark subsequently opted for a (probably anticipated) change to Very Important Shundiggers. Opening night was a boozey success, attended by a goodly number of the directors on the board of the Country Music Association who were in town for a quarterly meeting of industry big wigs at the Century Plaza.

THE V.I.S. is aiming for an affluent urban clientele not embarrassed to be seen in a night club where the fellow on stage is wearing cowboy boots and has hair slicked back all funny. In truth the big acts in Country are fully on a par with the best pop groups, but their audience is characteristically fortyish, white, smokes less dope and drink more. Like their counterparts in rock, however, the country acts attract their share of groupies.

Perhaps because there are less of them, full time C&W groupies often go by nicknames in the drag strip/race-horse category which are faithfully passed along the club circuit. Until recently the perennial favorite in Los Angeles was Hurricane Shirley, a good old gal who for the last ten years has serviced all the major acts on tour to the West Coast, including road managers, equipment men and relief bus drivers. Predictably her name has cropped up in Country songs over the years (Marty Robbins reportedly mentions her in one of his earlier, lesser hits).

Hurricane Shirley lately appears to have been put out to pasture by The Black Rider, a winsome lass of epic proportions who just loves them singin' cowboys.

The Country groupie tends to be older (sometimes much older) than her rock counterpart, wears shorter hair and seldom employs the direct "I'm-clean-I'm-over-18-let's-fuck" approach. But, as John Hartford opines: "They're the same as other groupies insofar as they all want to ball you."

On the same subject, Hartford sees a problem with pop music sounding more Country:

"Wouldn't it be something if all the categories of music broke down and all the groupies got confused because they didn't know who to ball? . . . The Plaster Casters would be going crazy. Everybody would be making music, man, they'd be plastering people in the streets."

If the groupie phenomenon in country music is less widespread and less competitive than rock, it is in part due to the life styles of the majority of established Country artists. Most are in their middle thirties or older, live in the suburbs, mow the lawn on Sundays, and make enough money to send the wife to the beauty parlor once a week. Though he works in a show business environment as morally relaxed as any field of entertainment, the Country artist by contrast with his co-equal in the rock world is more beholden to the personal restraints imposed on a Christian family man away from home for a few weeks. Or, as Hartford puts it, "I don't think Stuart Hamblin is going to expose himself at his next concert."

No, the eroticism and the glorious indiscretion of rock are antithetical to the nature of country music. But this is as it should be. Rock and roll is instinctively revolutionary, whereas country music is, not in a pejorative sense, reactionary. Perhaps it is historically significant that the most dynamic elements of each are being assimilated by American popular music.

Whether such assimilation will produce new vitality or new mediocrity in that music remains to be seen. But there is in the firmament of Country stars a performer whose approach to her music just might represent the wave of an uncertain future—Judy Lynn, Miss Show Business herself, a peach of a girl, a millionaire and consummate practitioner of what can only be called Gestalt Country.

—Continued on Page 30

All you can eat, \$4.98

Red Beans & Rice is a bargain.

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And Red Beans & Rice is far more exotic than the stuff you're used to ingesting.

Ray Draper, leader and organizer of RB&R, was originally a modern

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jazz tuba player. (Think about that.)

He formed the group because the world of modern jazz wasn't quite ready for Ray.

Now, in the Red Beans & Rice album, Ray goes jazz, and blues and soul two better.

You'll eat it up.

EPIC



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Page 2.

Buffy Sainte-Marie

VANGUARD
RECORDINGS
FOR THE
CONNOISSEUR





BARON WOLMAN

Judy Lynn

JUDY LYNN and her eight piece band ride the Silver Circuit, a chain of Nevada casino lounges in Las Vegas, Reno and Lake Tahoe. She's been doing it for six months out of the year for the last nine years and loving it. To each of her three nightly performances she brings one of the best Country bands in the business, a creditable voice (bothersome vibrato), the all-American beauty of a former Miss Idaho (1960), and the kind of tight-fitting super flashy Western clothes that only a \$75,000 Nudie wardrobe can offer. For her trouble Miss Lynn grosses \$15,000 a week.

In a state where casino-Country acts draw terribly, the Judy Lynn Show is the longest running club act of any kind in Nevada. During that time the personable lass recorded 11 albums, became a top drawing card on the lucrative summer State Fair circuit, won Billboard's accolade as the Most Promising Country and Western Female Vocalist in 1967, and managed to keep her figure.

Miss Lynn and her producer/husband John Kelley recently spent a month in San Francisco taping 39

half-hour shows (with no guest artists) for national television syndication. Between Judy Lynn Shows No. 27 and 28 she paused to consider her past.

"When I first started out everyone told me not to wear pants, but to wear instead a gingham dress and be a pure little country girl and keep my mouth shut. Well, I had more ambition than that and with my husband's help, and the good Lord's, we are succeeding. . . . Of course people today say any millionaire can have a big show, but they don't know how low me and my husband started."

The starting point was having their car repossessed in Nashville ten years ago. Times were doubtless hard. Miss Lynn was 21 at the time and only recently converted to the beauty and rich heritage of country music. Her idols of those halcyon pre-rock days were Doris Day and Rosemary Clooney. Somehow she took on the Doris Day mystique through the years, even as her interests broadened.

"I love rock . . . we do a lot of things on the show that are quite similar, like 'Downtown.' We want to appeal to city people and yet we're as hillbilly as you can get. We do songs like 'Good Old

Mountain Dew' and 'Wabash Cannonball.' And yet we also do 'Moon Over Naples' and 'My Cup Runneth Over With Love.' . . ."

They are all fine songs. And Miss Lynn is a genuine, likable person. But there is something about her—about what she is doing—that pulls into focus the disparate elements of a terrible vision.

It all comes together in the persona of Judy Lynn as Miss Show Business. There she is, out there in limbo between California and Tennessee, orbiting on a north-south axis past the Golden Nugget, Caesar's Palace and Harrah's Club. She is a native of Idaho; her band hails from California and the Midwest; she records in Nashville; her sparkle plenty outfits are made in Hollywood; her television shows are taped in San Francisco; she's beautiful, blonde, white, sacred and sincere; and she is singing the songs of Jimmie Rodgers and Hank Williams, of Buck Owens and Merle Haggard, of Jimmy Webb, John Hartford, Johnny Cash, Bob Dylan and a thousand others. She is singing everybody's songs. Everybody's.

And they all sound the same.

OUR MOTHER THE MOUNTAIN

ROLLING STONE

TOWNES
VAN
ZANDTHe writes folk
music that realizes
a new world.He sings folk music
that imitates no one,
but will be imitated
by many.Listen to his new album,
"Our Mother the Mountain."
Then you will understand.

Page 3.

Country Joe
and the FishVANGUARD
RECORDINGS
FOR THE
CONNOISSEURHERE WE ARE AGAIN
COUNTRY JOE & THE FISH

PERSPECTIVES: HANK WILLIAMS, ROY ACUFF AND THEN GOD!!

By Ralph J. Gleason

Hank Williams came out of the bathroom carrying a glass of water. He was lean, slightly stooped over and long-jawed. He shook hands quickly, then went over to the top of the bureau, swept off a handful of pills and deftly dropped them, one at a time, with short, expert slugs from the glass.

I didn't really know doodley-britt about country-western music except that I dug Ernest Tubb and T. Texas Tyler and thought that "You Two Timed Me One Time Too Often" was a great song. But I was writing about popular music for the San Francisco Chronicle and Hank Williams was by God popular and a fatish man with big glasses named Wally Elliott, who doubled as a C/W disc jockey under the *nom de disque* of Longhorn Lee was presenting Williams in several one-nighters. So I went to talk to him.

The bathroom was in the Lexington Hotel which is the biggest hotel in Oakland and could have been any one of the standard Muhlebach or old Statler hotels anywhere in the U.S., the salesman's shelter. All I knew about Hank Williams was that he made records as Luke the Drifter and under his own name and had sold millions and he sure wrote good songs. I was a little surprised by the pills, but then he looked pale and thin and had deep-set eyes and might have been hung over for all I knew. It was June, 1952, six months before he died in that car's back seat on New Year's day, with everybody denying the first report that it was from an overdose.

So he threw the pill boxes in his suitcase, and we went down to the coffee shop. Hank Williams talked and ate breakfast and I wrote it down.

"I've been singing ever since I can remember," he said. He was 29 then, doing 200 one-nighters a year and grossing over \$400,000, he said. "My mother was an organist at Mt. Olive, Alabama, and my earliest memory is sittin' on that organ stool by her and hollerin'. I must have been five, six years old and louder than anybody else."

"I learned to play the git-tar from an old colored man in the streets of Montgomery. He was named Toot and he played in a colored street band. They had a washtub bass. You ever seen one of them? Well, it had a hole in the middle with a broom handle stuck in it and a rope for the strings."

"I was shinin' shoes and sellin' newspapers and followin' this old Nigrah around to get him to teach me to play the git-tar. I'd give him 15¢ or whatever I could get a hold of for a lesson. When I was about eight years old, I got my first git-tar. A second hand \$3.50 git-tar my mother bought me. Then I got a jazz horn and played both of them at dances and had a band when I was 14 or 15."

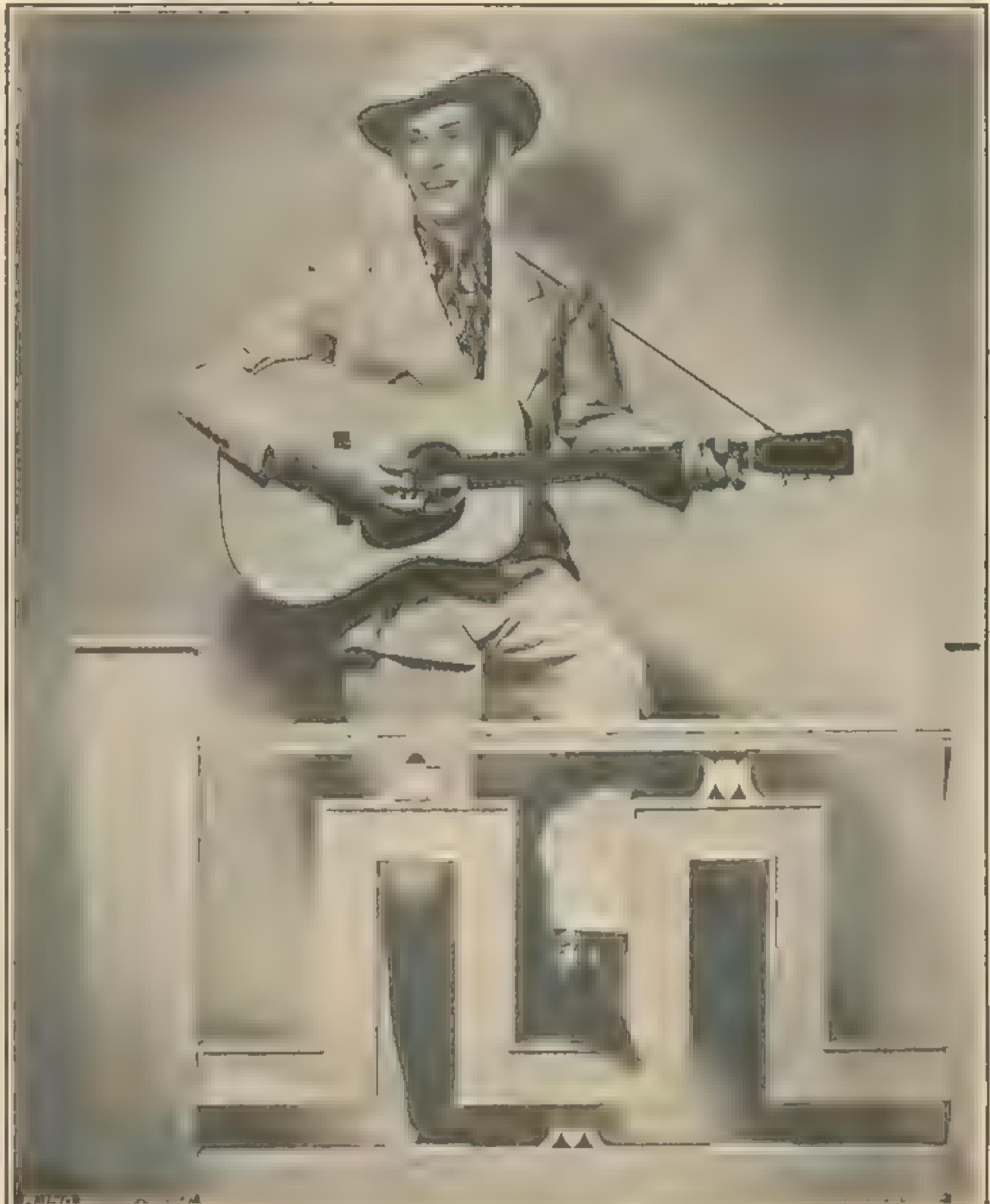
Hank went on the air on WSFA in Montgomery when he was still in school and, after he met Fred Rose, he cut his first records for Sterling. "One session, \$90 for four sides including 'Never Again Will I Knock On Your Door.'"

That started it all. MGM signed him. He starred with the C&W radio programs for years and had an incredible string of hit records in the days of the 78 rpm disc and his songs were recorded by many other performers, too.

"A good song is a good song," Hank said as he ate. "And if I'm lucky enough to write it, well . . . I get more kick out of writing than I do singing. I reckon I've written a thousand songs and had over 300 published."

Hank surprised me by referring to his music as "folk music." "Folk music is sincere. There ain't nuthin' phony about it. When a folk singer sings a sad song, he's sad. He means it. The tunes are simple and easy to remember and the singers, they're sincere about them."

"I don't say I ever write for popularity. I check a song by its lyrics. A song ain't nuthin' in the world but a story just wrote with music to it. I can't sing 'Rag Mop' or 'Mairzy Doats.' But the best way for me to get a hit is to do something I don't like. I've



been offered some of the biggest songs to sing and turned them down. There ain't nobody can pick songs. Because I say it's good, don't mean it'll sell.

"I like Johnny Ray. He's sincere and shows he's sincere. That's the reason he's popular. He sounds to me like he means it. What I mean by sincerity, Ray Acuff is the best example. He's the biggest singer this music ever knew. You booked him and you didn't worry about crowds. For drawing power in the South, it was Roy Acuff and then God!! He done it with 'Wabash Cannonball' and with 'Great Speckled Bird.' He'd stand up there singing, tears running down his cheeks."

Acuff was his idol and Fred Rose his inspiration. "Fred Rose, it was my good fortune to be associated with him. He came to Nashville to laugh and he heard Acuff and said 'By God, he means it!'"

Sipping coffee and talking, Hank went on about now forgotten singers like Bill Darnell, about Roy Acuff and Fred Rose and Ernest Tubb and Bing Crosby, about "Wheel of Fortune" and "I Love You So Much It Hurts Me."

Pretty soon Wally Elliott looked at his watch and said he had to take Hank off somewhere to plug that night's show: Hank was looking a little better now, the paleness under the close shaven jaws had been replaced with some color and he didn't look quite so peaked.

So they split and I split and later that night I drove out to San Pablo Hall which is way out past El Cerrito and Richmond and almost to Vallejo. San Pablo Avenue, possibly the longest main street in the world, runs for almost 20 miles from downtown Oakland on out there and in 1952 there were no freeways. When you got to San Pablo, it looked like every place else only a little raunchier and San Pablo Hall was a one story white building on a lot a block off the Avenue. You parked in the mud and walked past a tree up to the door and inside there was a long room with a bandstand at one end and a bar in an annex at one side.

Wally Elliott, who had been wearing a business suit in the afternoon and looked like one of Ralph Williams' Ford salesman, was a Western dude now, with full Grand Ole Opry regalia, Stetson hat, hand made boots. The whole bit. The band was terrible. I only remember that about them and shortly after I got there Hank Williams went on. He looked just like he looked at the hotel except that he now had a Western hat and a guitar. When he sang, he looked like he squeezed himself to get the notes out sometimes and he seemed shorter somehow than when we were talking in the coffee shop.

He did them all, all his hits, "Jambalaya," "Lovesick Blues," "Move It On Over." I don't remember him singing any of the Luke the Drifter religious songs. Not even "I Saw the Light." But he did the barrelhouse blues and the bar room ballads, "Cold, Cold Heart" and "Hey, Good Lookin'" and "Your Cheatin' Heart."

And he had that *thing*. He made them scream when he sang and that audience was shipped right up from Enid or Wichita Falls intact (like Elia Kazan shipped the bit players for *Baby Doll* up from the deep South to Long Island for a scene). There were lots of those blondes you see at C&W affairs, the kind of hair that mother never had and nature never grew and the tight skirts that won't quit and the guys looking barbershop neat but still with a touch of dust on them. "Shit-kicker dances" the outside world called them then but some great people came through to play for them and this time it was Hank Williams and the Driftin' Cowboys it said, but I believe now (as I suspected then) that the only Driftin' Cowboy was Hank.

At the intermission, it was impossible to talk to him. He was a little stoned and didn't seem to remember our conversation earlier in the day and the party was beginning to get a little rough. They were whisky drinkers and so I gave them room, looked around a while and then went on back out.

Six months later when I read he had died I remembered him saying, in that Oakland hotel coffee shop, how much he loved his Tennessee ranch but how little time he got to spend there because he was on the road so much. "Last time I was there it rained," he said sourly. And then he added that he was stocking the ranch with cattle and his ambition someday was to retire there and watch "them cattle work while I write songs an' fish."

He never did, of course. I had no idea how tortured a man he was when I saw him. It came through more in his performance. He didn't cry but he could make you cry and when he sang "Lovesick Blues" you knew he meant it.

So he died in the back seat of a car en route from one gig to another, from one ratty dance hall to another ratty dance hall, while the world gradually came to sing his songs and his Hollywood-ized life was shown and reshown on late night TV and the court fight for his estate went on for years. Still goes on, I think, that legal fight, like some ghost walking the pine hills for eternity.

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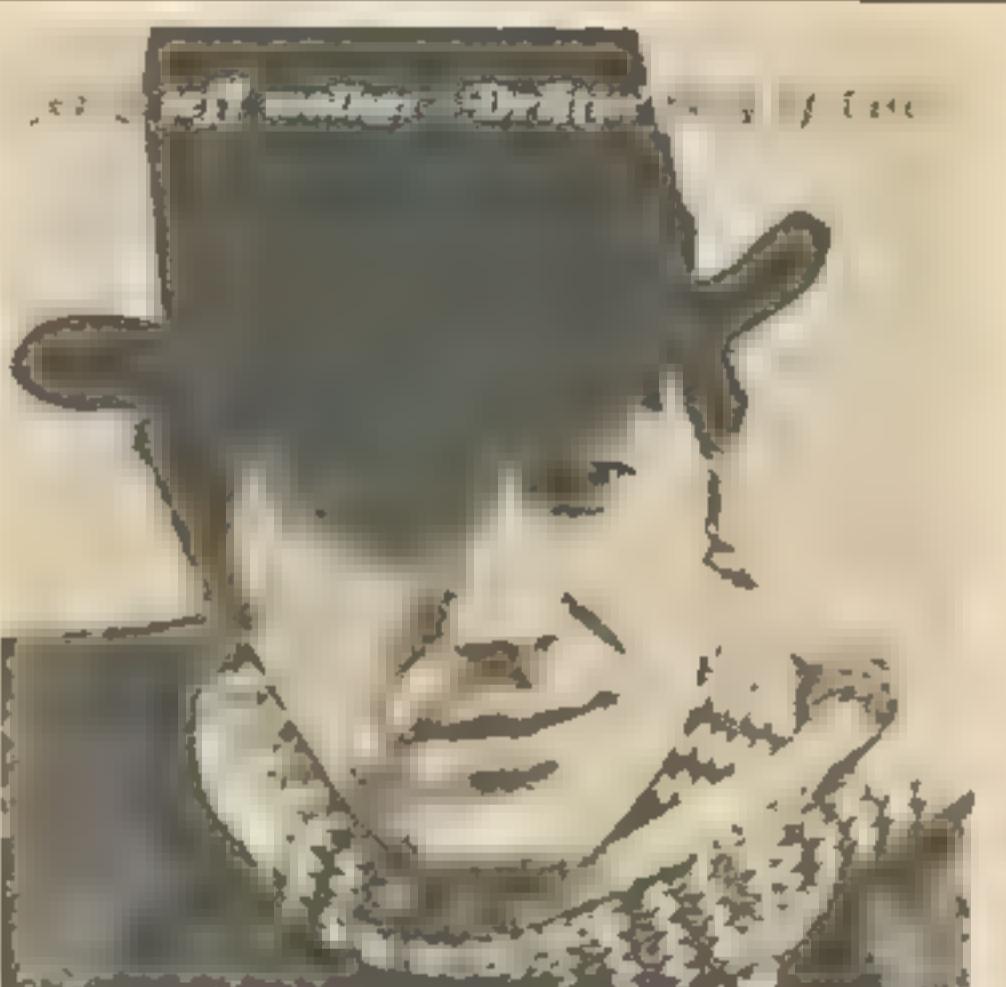
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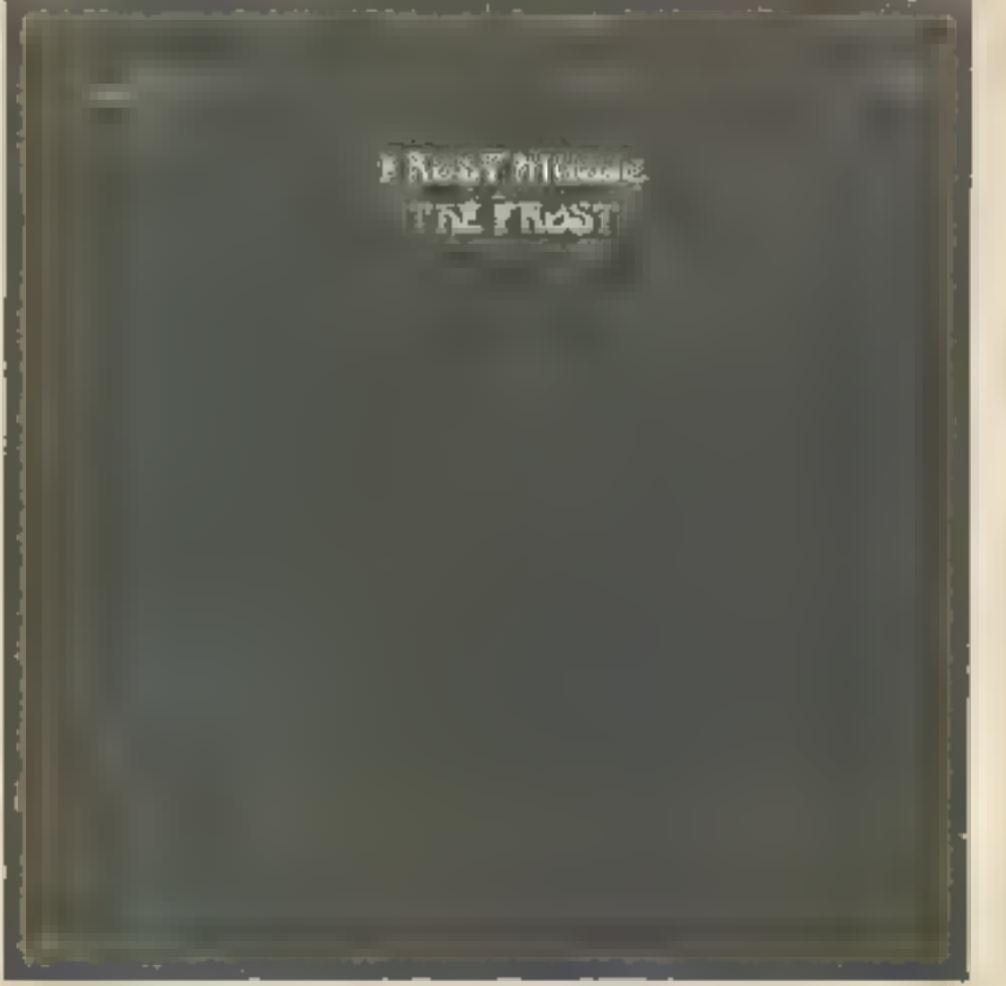


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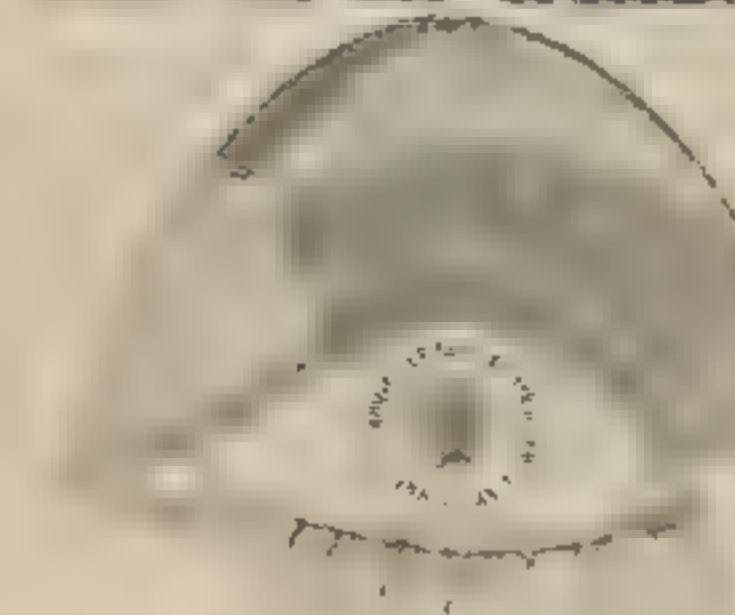


The Frost



Open Window

THE OPEN WINDOW

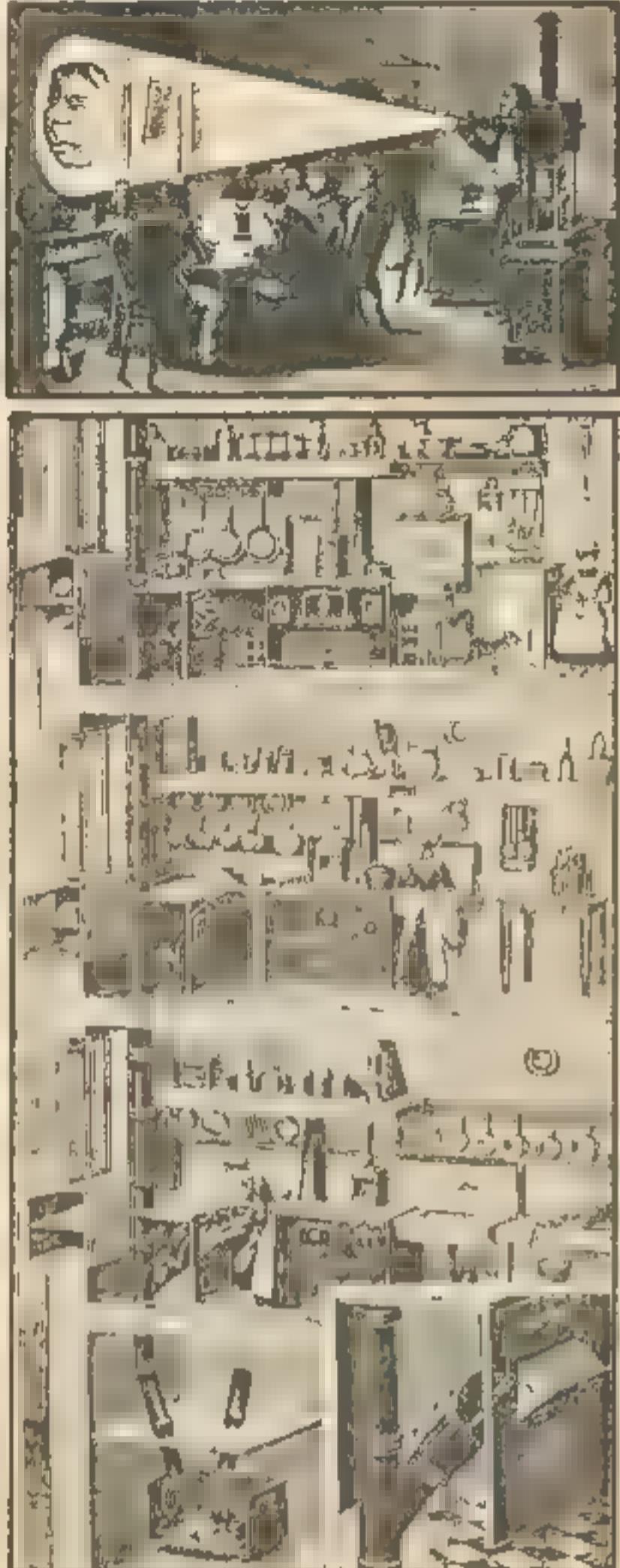


VANGUARD
RECORDINGS
FOR THE
CONNOISSEUR



INSTALLMENT
FOUR

THE SAGA OF THE NARCOTICS BRIGADE

BY
AKBAR DEL PIOMBO

This illustration shows the elaborate system employed for rapid disposal of drugs in the event of a police raid. Sir Edwin has already brought to justice a number of criminal landlords, guilty of installing their houses with these deceptive constructions at the behest of the criminals. Stoves also conceal secret distillation systems adaptable for the production of a fairly good brand of Bourbon. Sir Edwin, however, is purely a Scotch man, for it would be unreasonable for him to favor unorthodox tastes.



"Junkie" receiving daily dose. Stomach incisional system is in use only as a last resort when no more puncturable skin surface is available.

REHASH: In the wake of an out-break of crime traced to dope usage, the N.Y.P.D. has summoned help from the British super-sleuth Sir Edwin Fuzz. In the last issue we left Sir Edwin in a projection room undergoing rapid brief-ing.

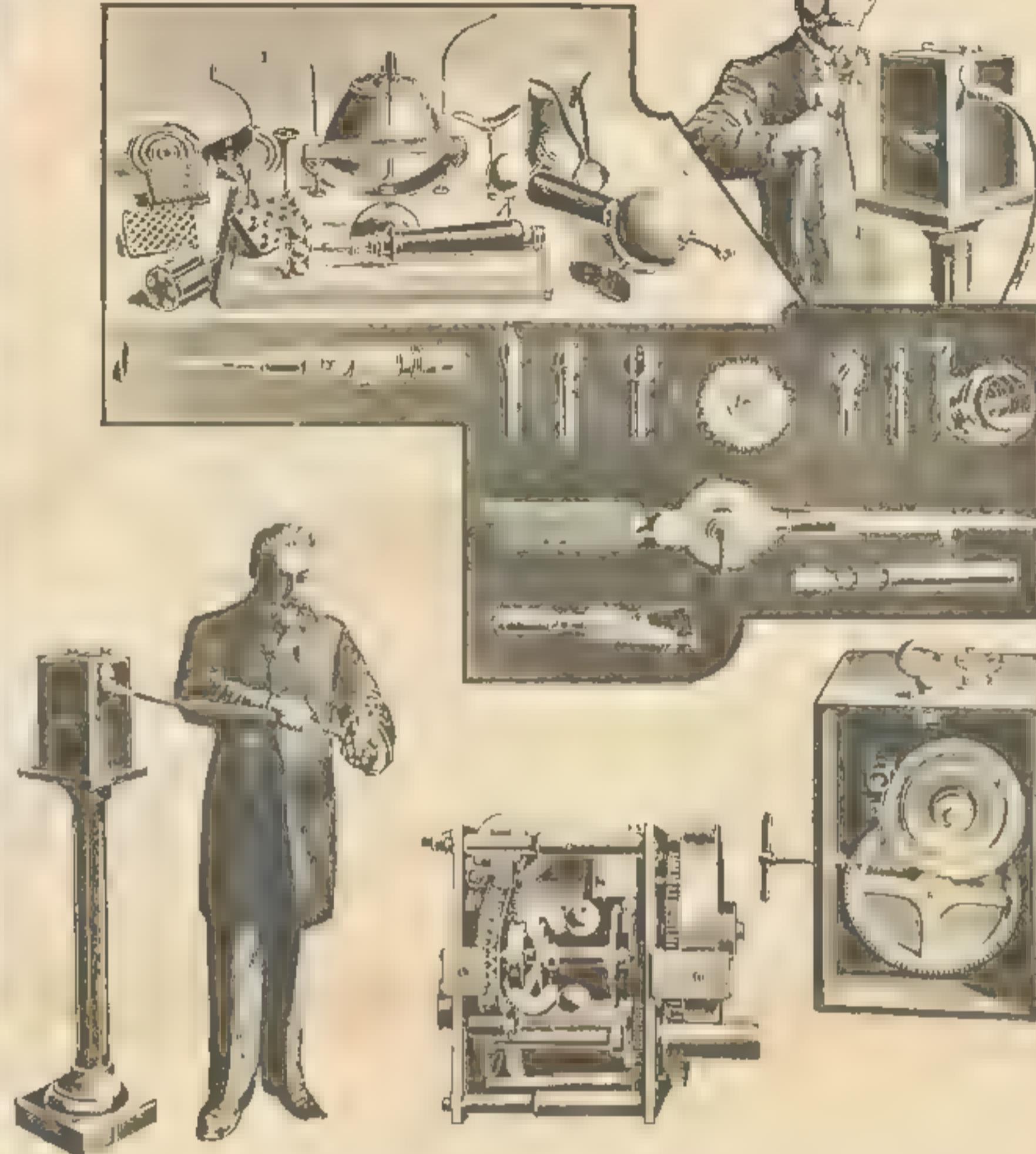
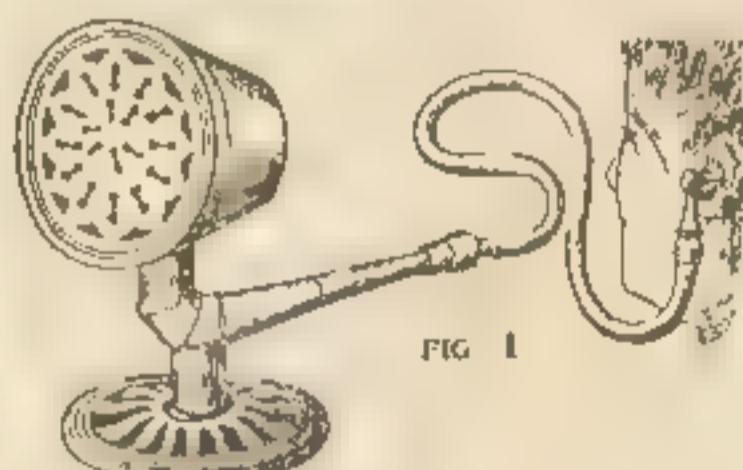


FIG. 2



Auricular injection method of Heroin. Fig. 1, with built-in fan, for home use. Fig. 2, a system on the osmosis principle, disguised for outdoor consumption. Criminal poses as deafmute to enjoy daily dose in public.



Here we find one of the most amazing hauls ever made in narcotics history. Intensive laboratory examination has not yet revealed the functions of all the curious instruments pictured. Obviously the work of Swiss craftsmen, Sir Edwin is at a loss to explain the clock-like instrument in the lower right-hand corner. Most of the needle-like objects were meant for intravenous hypodermic syringes and their considerable variety of form, the use of wheels and drilling apparatus, suggests they were employed by a fanatical sect of masochistic "junkies." (Junkies: criminal term for Heroin addicts.) At the top left, one sees the more classical syringes with gadgets that served equally for self-punishment or clandestine obstetrics. Top right and bottom left show two possible functions for the clock mechanism; one of Sir Edwin's pet theories is that the addict of low means could hereby attain his daily dosage by some process of osmosis, whether by placing the special head on the surface of the lung or through the fingers as demonstrated.



"Junkie" receiving daily dose. Oral incisional system used for the same reasons as in the preceding example. (Note the extreme youthfulness of the criminal. The administrator is a so-called "beatnik" whom Sir Edwin captured in the great San Francisco raid.)

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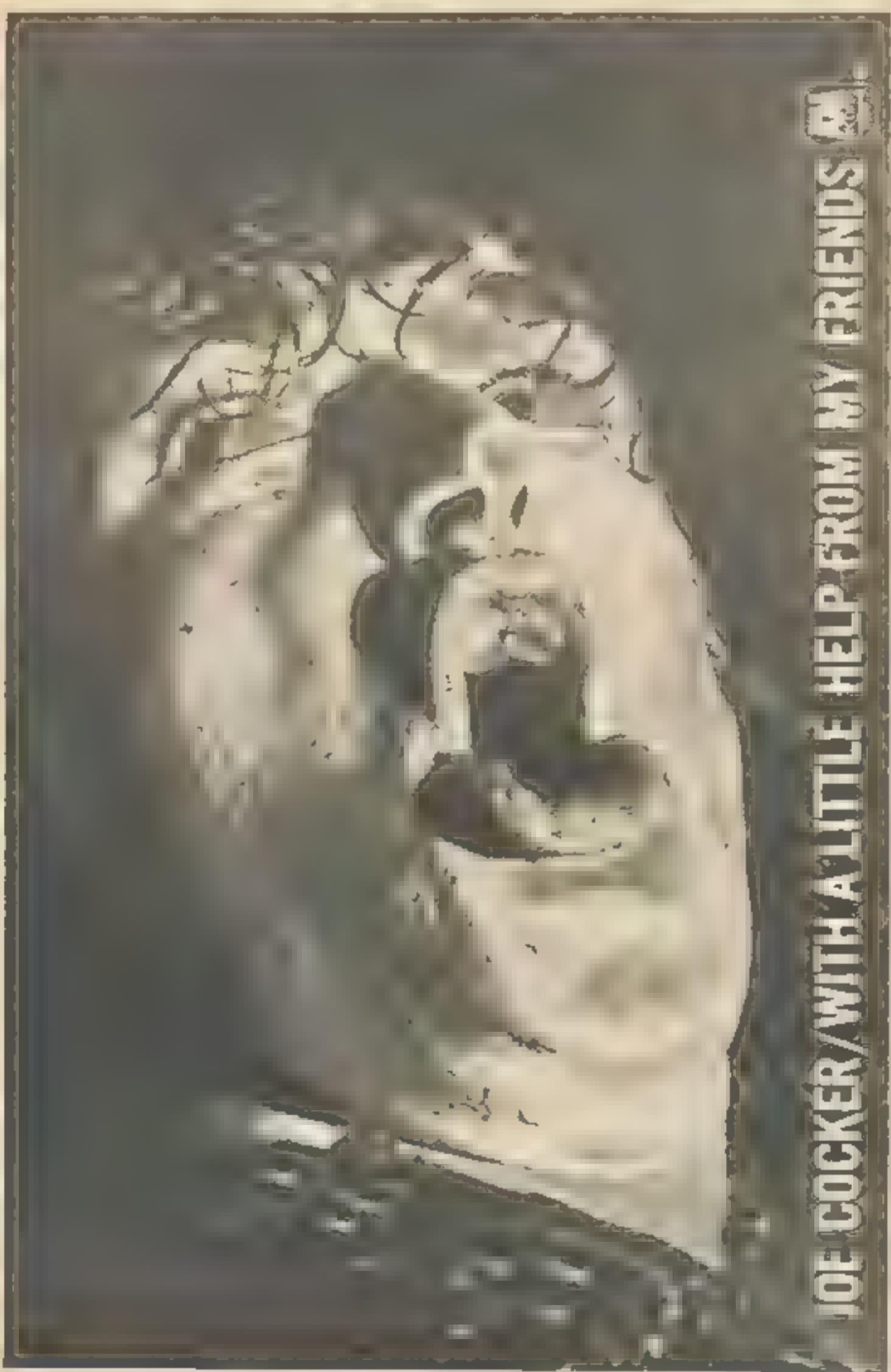
“The fuzz has been
asking questions
about my joint
bank account.”

...BIFF ROSE

“Clean your
windows or I'll only
see your pane.”

...BIFF ROSE

JOE COCKER/WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS



Appearing at Fillmore West—June 12 thru June 15

RECORDS

BY GREIL MARCUS

Clear Lake, Iowa, Feb. 3 (UPI) Three of the nation's top rock-'n' roll singing stars — Ritchie Valens, J. P. (The Big Bopper) Richardson, and Buddy Holly—died today with their pilot in the crash of a chartered plane.

The singers, members of a rock n-roll troupe touring Midwest cities, died because they wanted to make a fast hop between dates so they could get their shirts laundered.

The tragedy that ended the careers of the three rising stars symbolized, in a way that was powerfully real, the decline of the strange new music that was carrying us into adolescence and adulthood. In rock and roll one has to be a fan as well as a listener, and the energy of the music depends on stars as much as it does on expertise and creativity. Send Jimi Hendrix to prison for a few years, bust John Lennon and Mick Jagger just one more time, and it won't matter much how good the next album by the Byrds sounds. Rock and roll is not composed in conservatories or judged in museums—this is one world where infinity does not go up on trial 19 and 59—the stars were gone.

The sound Buddy Holly had brought together was left to the second stringers, members of the bands who previously had been happy to back him up or copy his material. Then Bobby Vee appropriated the Crickets for an LP, and hired a young piano player, Bob Dylan, for his road band. That was where the momentum was. Rock and roll, as Dylan himself put it, became "a piece of cream."

Today, we can discover that the heritage of that flimsy, beautiful era comes to more than just the million-sellers everyone remembers. The spirit of the old music, brash, innocent, is a spirit our best craftsmen have never lost, and the memories are more than music—they jump out of an awareness of crucial, sometimes tragic events that exaggerate every note of "La Bamba" and "Peggy Sue" until there's just a lot more there to hear.

Following an appearance before 1000 fans at Clear Lake last night, they chartered a plane at the Mason City Airport, two miles east of here, and took off at 1:50 AM for Fargo, North Dakota. Their Bonanza four-seat single engine plane crashed minutes later.

If Buddy Holly were alive today I've no doubt that he, like Johnny Cash, would be recording with Bob Dylan (The band, for their part, tried to get Gene Vincent to visit the sessions for their latest album, only to discover him living in a hospital in Los Angeles, crippled by an accident.) When young Bob Dylan brought an electric rock and roll band on stage at a junior high school music pageant back in Hibbing, Minnesota, to a reception similar to the one he received when he did the same thing at Newport years later, Buddy Holly tunes were most likely part of the program. Traces of Holly's vocal style, his phrasing rather than his insane changes from deep bass to something resembling soprano, pop up all through Dylan's career on an obscure 1962 Columbia single, "Mixed-Up Confusion," on "Absolutely Sweet Marie," on "I Shall Be Free No. 10," anywhere you look. Dylan and Holly share a clipped, staccato delivery that communicates a sly sense of cool, almost teenage masculinity.

This spirit is captured at its best on one of Holly's finest albums, *The Great Buddy Holly* (Vocalion VL 3811), recently released as a budget item (\$1.98). The LP contains ten cuts recorded in Nashville before Holly made it as a star (these are the songs discussed by Barret Hansen in "Tex-Mex," the article in ROLLING STONE #23, but they are available). The accompanying musicians, lacking the flush and the excitement of Holly's later band, do all the right things and put the burden on Holly. He carries it with ease, on an early version



Buddy Holly

of "That'll Be the Day," on love songs, on school-boy rockers. It's with the last two songs, "Don't Come Back Knockin'" and "Midnight Shift," that Holly gets into rock and roll like a young Carl Perkins singing about women who cheat on him, not people who step on his shoes. This isn't the blues—there is no self-pity, not even a tear. Buddy has the last laugh. "Annie's begin working on the midnight shift"—he's glad to let you know, and he's not referring to overtime pay at the all-night drugstore. The phrasing is simply what we know as pure Dylan—

If she tells you she wants to use the caahhhh!
Never explains what she want it faahhhh!

—what Phil Spector meant when he heard the Four Tops doing "Reach Out" and said, "yeah, that's a black man singing Dylan." In an odd way, it was the Four Tops doing Buddy Holly. If things had been different, Holly and Dylan might be surprising us all with a snappy duet on "I Don't Believe You."

The plane skidded across the snow for 558 feet. Holly, 21, was found twenty feet from the wreckage.

Following his death, Coral Records released half a dozen albums of Holly's hits and memorabilia. While *The Buddy Holly Story* (biggest hits, Coral CRL 757279) ought to be part of everyone's collection, there is much more. Holly's obscure recordings, made on home tape-recorders, in high school with his pal Bob Montgomery, demos and rehearsal acetates, have been re-recorded with studio musicians, often the Fireballs, supplementing the original vocal tracks.

The feeling one gets from listening to these cuts, an uneven collection of vari-

ous Number One records ("Smokey Joe's Cafe," "Shake Rattle and Roll," "Blue Monday," "Love is Strange," "Rip It Up," and so one), is that of visiting a funeral parlor to watch an embalmer touch up the face of a body mangled in an accident. The guy does a great job but you still don't recognize the face. For the most part, these records are interesting historically, not musically—they show where Holly came from, sounding like an anemic Carl Perkins on "Blue Suede Shoes," until he finally emerges as an original, able to master any sort of material in a way that is unique and compelling. His vocal on "Love Is Strange" steals the song from Micky and Sylvia. Holly had it all down.

Sometimes, these ancient cuts provide a real sense of what rock and roll might have become had Holly lived. The same shock of recognition that knocked out the audiences at the Fillmore West when the band from Big Pink lit into Little Richard takes place, with the same song, when the ghost of Buddy Holly is joined by the Fireballs for "Slippin' and Slidin'" (from *Giant*, the "new" Holly release, Coral CRL 757504). An agile, humorous vocal is carried by a band that knows all the tricks. They break it open with the Everly Brothers' own seductive intro, constantly switching, musically, from song to song while Holly ties it together. The guitarist actually sounds like Robbie Robertson, throwing in bright little patterns around the constant whoosh of the cymbals. The excitement and confusion that comes from a precise marriage of the two songs is irresistible—it's certainly one of the best things Buddy Holly never did. He was only twenty one, so Coral Records just brought him out of the grave.

Valens, a 17 year old recording sensation hailed as "the next Elvis Presley," was thrown forty feet. Valens, from Pacoima, California, was rapidly becoming one of the hottest singing talents in the country. His first record, of a song he had written called "Come On, Let's Go," was released last summer and made him famous.

Richard Valenzuela, a Southern California boy. Ruben of Ruben and the Jets was patterned after Ritchie, and much of the material on the *Cruising* album is a fair representation of Valens' music. Today, it might all seem rather laughable, but for Ritchie and his fans, as Zappa would be the first to admit, it was no joke, it was just the way it was. "We made this album because we really like this kind of music: just a bunch of old men with rock & roll clothes on sitting around the studio, thumbing about the good old days."

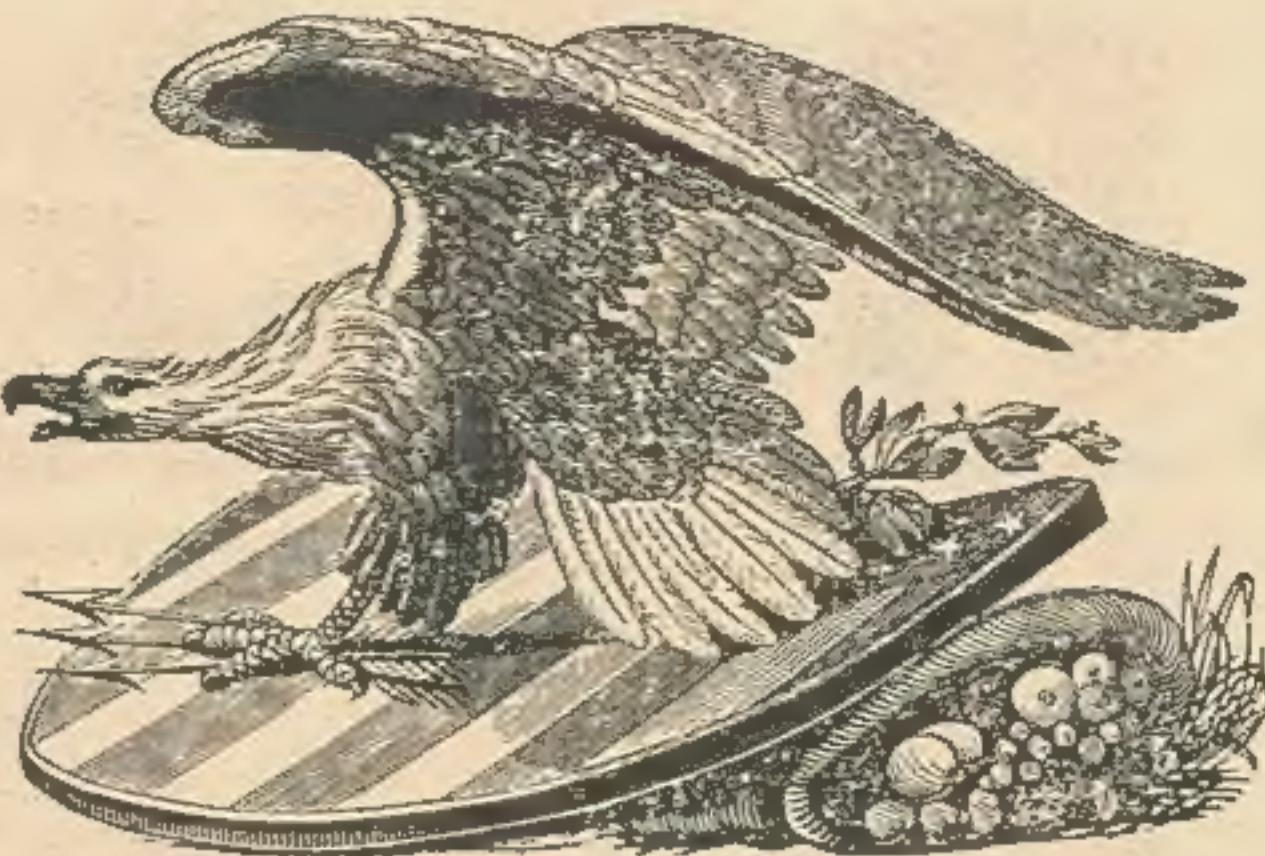
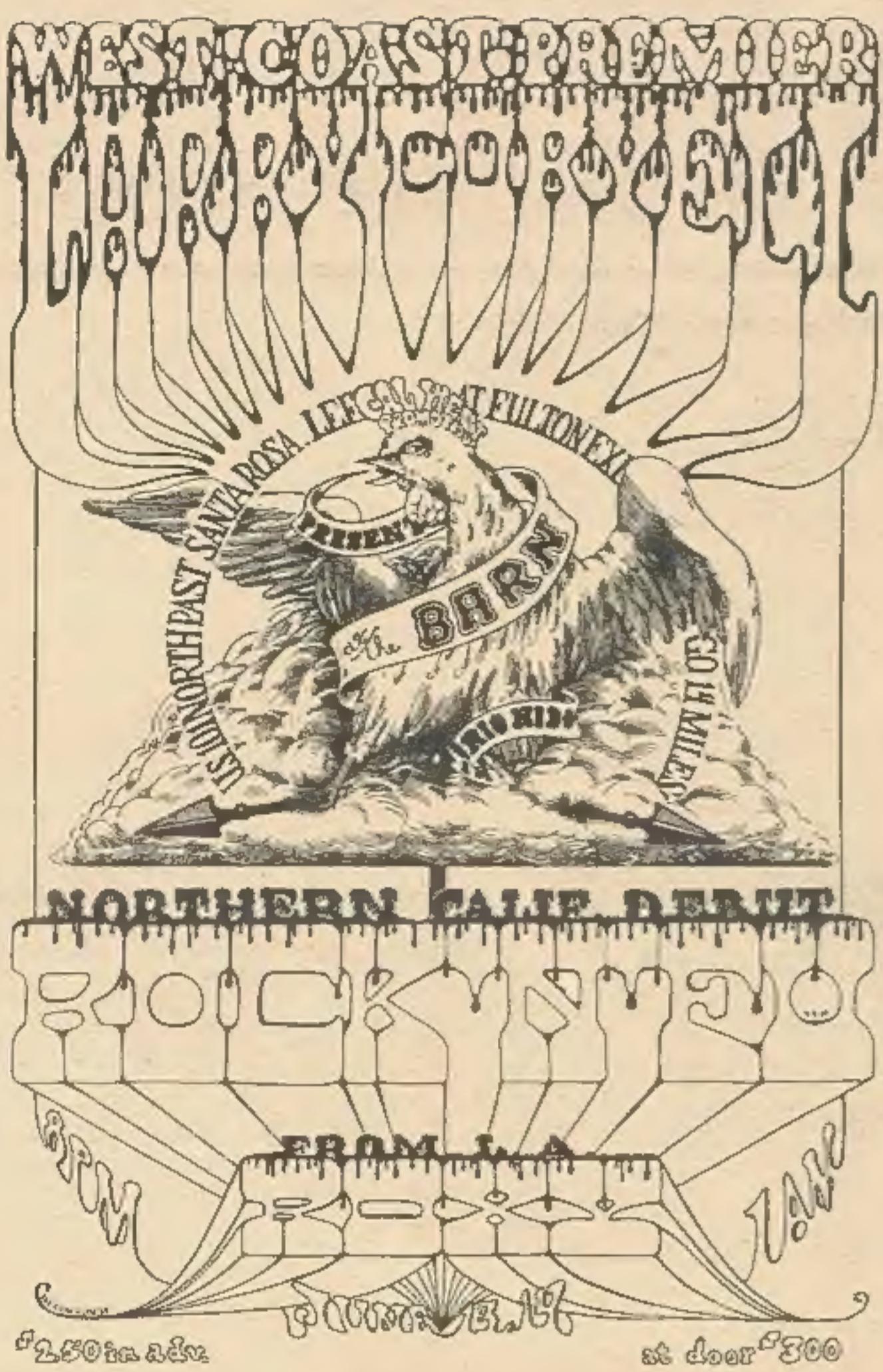
Valens was a hero to the Mexican-American community in Los Angeles, and they cheered him on with the same kind of support they gave when one of their boys faced a black welterweight in the annual Golden Gloves tournament. It meant a lot to break into a field that had always been in the hands of larger, more established minorities—blacks, Italians, Okies—Ritchie was the first Chicano singer, a hero, just a kid, but a hero.

Valens sang fragile melodies with the enthusiasm and commitment of Little Richard, and the tension that resulted from a fusion of these two elements in a single song captivated his audience and made him a star. Imagine Little Richard singing "Whispering Bells" or perhaps something like Mary Hopkins' "Goodbye" the way he sang "Louie" and you have Ritchie Valens. He could turn it around: "Donna" is as touching a ballad as "I Threw It All Away."

Valens took an old Mexican festival song, "La Bamba," gave it a rock and roll beat, and scored with one of the most exciting records of the era. The split second flashes of the intro, the guitar break that happens before Ritchie has finished with the words—they were all in so much of a hurry the notes pile up on top of each other until the song itself explodes. And Valens traveled twenty feet farther than either Buddy Holly or the Big Bopper. What is left?

The only LP by Ritchie Valens that is still in print is a weird budget album (88c) on Guest Star Records (GS-1469), available in supermarkets and drugstores, "a product of the Synthetic Plastics Co." "Fine records need not be expensive" is their slogan. Again, more graverobbers. The company has taken Ritchie's audition tapes (vocal and fine acoustic guitar playing), studio jams that were recorded for vocals that were never sung, and some unreleased masters, added the hit version of "Donna," and come up with "an album." Surprisingly, it works as a record: starting with the early tapes, a kid trying to get his first contract, the sense of melody is there and there is no doubt about the talent. As with the Holly albums, we go through a period of uncertainty, the tracks randomly titled ("Rock Little Donna" is really about a girl named Susie), Ritchie finding himself, beginning to work with a band. Then the triumph, his perfect "Donna," a few pleasant songs, two jams, and it's over. This is Juke Box Heaven, courtesy of Guest Star Records. This is what is left. When Valens died "La Bamba" was right up there in the Top Ten; a week later it was slipping down off the charts, and Bobby Vinton was there, holding Ritchie's coat.

The wreckage and the bodies were not discovered until long after dawn. The other members of the troupe, including singer Frankie Sardo, the "Crickets," and "Dion and the Belmonts," made the trip by bus. Although grief-stricken, their performance tonight in Moorhead, Minn., took place as scheduled.



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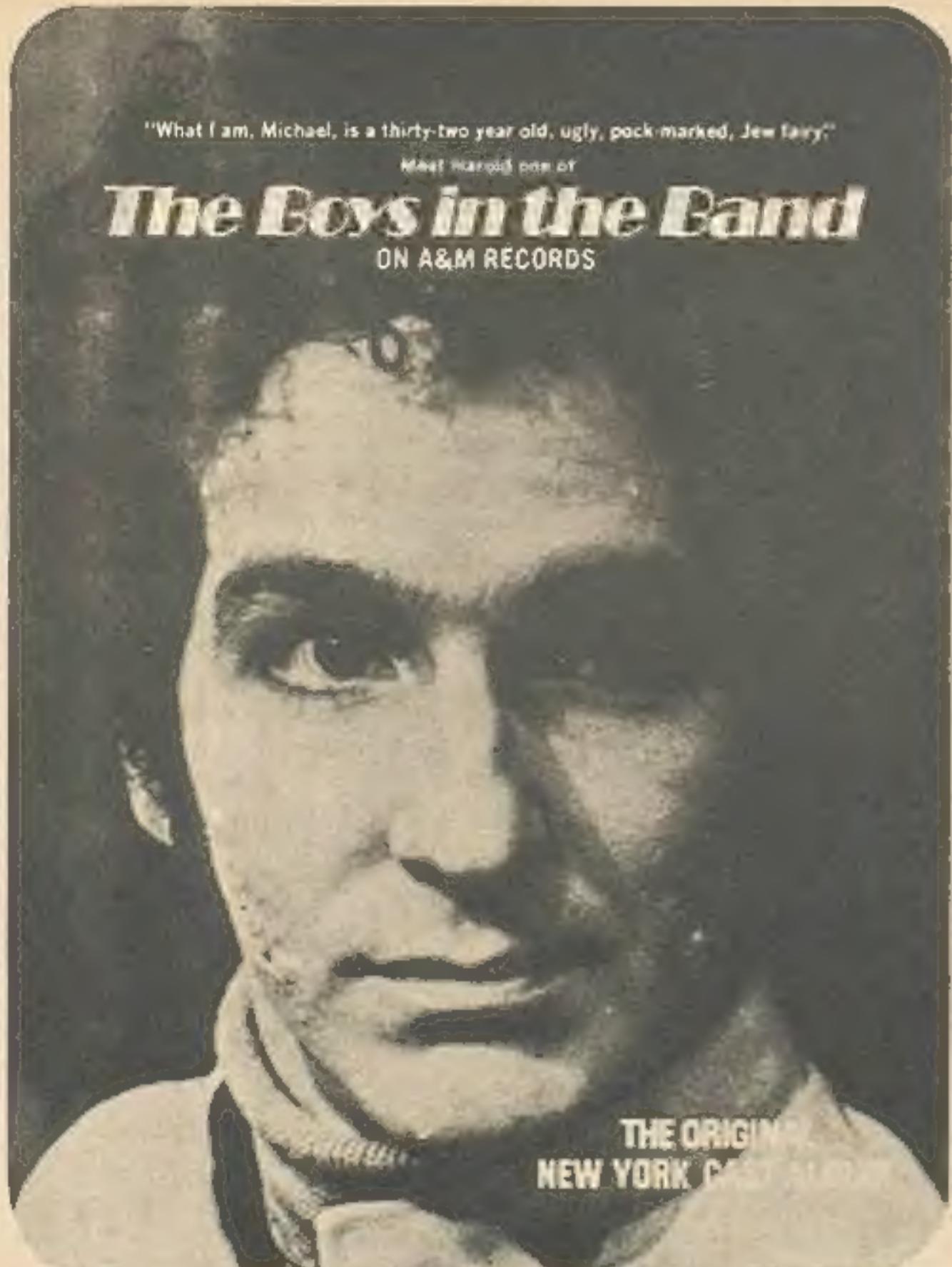
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...BIFF ROSE



A Short Story About Contemporary Life In California

BY RICHARD BRAUTIGAN

There are thousands of stories with original beginnings. This is not one of them. I think the only way to start a story about contemporary life in California is to do it the way Jack London started *The Sea-Wolf*. I have confidence in that beginning.

It worked in 1904 and it can work in 1969. I believe that beginning can reach across the decades and serve the purpose of this story because this is California—we can do anything we want to do—and a rich young literary critic is taking a ferryboat from Sausalito to San Francisco. He has just finished spending a few days at a friend's cabin in Mill Valley. The friend uses the cabin to read Schopenhauer and Nietzsche during the winter. They all have great times together.

While travelling across the bay in the fog he thinks about writing an essay called "The Necessity for Freedom: A Plea for the Artist."

Of course, Wolf Larsen torpedoes the ferry and captures the rich young literary critic who is changed instantly into a cabin boy and has to wear funny clothes and take lot of shit off everybody, has great intellectual conversations with old Wolf, gets kicked in the ass, grabbed by the throat, promoted to mate, grows up, meets his true love Maud, escapes from Wolf, bounces around the damn Pacific Ocean in little better than a half-assed rowboat, finds an island, builds a stone hut, clubs seals, fixes a broken sailing ship, buries Wolf at sea, gets kissed, etc.: all to end this story about contemporary life in California sixty-five years later.

Thank God.

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Free space is provided here for hungry musicians: If you need a gig, are looking for someone to play with or something to play, feel free to mail us your ad, short and to the point. If you have something to sell, on the other hand, you pay (\$2.00 per line, enclosed with the ad). Be sure to indicate city and state when your mail your ad to: Musicians' Classified, 748 Brannan Street, San Francisco, California 94108.

DYNAMIC GIRL singer wants to join rock-psychadelic group to make a different sound. Own material. Lorraine—(201) 778-0807, Manhattan.

TOGETHER LYRICIST seeks multi-influenced Traffic/Procol Harum band for creative endeavors. Jazz/blues OK. Bruce—882-2472, NY.

STEVE MCCLANE & Jim Perry—Moses is in Hollywood trying to find you for heavy group. Call now—874-2083, 7801 Hollywood Blvd., H'wy'd.

EXPD. BLUES guitarist wants to play lead rock-blues group. Like BB, Beck, Page, etc. Good equip. Gerry Higgins—239-3071, North Haven, Conn.

UNBELIEVABLE DRUMMER wants to play with anything but records. Humans preferred. Neal—VO 3-5333, St. Louis, Mo.

WANT ORGANIST, 21-27, union, Hammond, intelligent, imaginative, willing to work, concert & record. Call person-to-person collect: Bradford's Uncle—494-9914, PO Box 231, Laguna Beach, Calif.

HEAVY BLUES guitarist seeks work with steady working blues band. Will send tape if requested. '68 Lee Paul, etc. Randal Wray—346-1267, 421 Beauregard St., Charleston, W. Va.

WANTED: GINGER Baker-style drummer. Must have equip., willing to live in Hawaii. Rock, blues, psychedelic, make \$300/mo. Alvin Estrella—c/o Zodiak—88-111-B Mano Ave., Nanakuli, Hawaii.

SUPER LEAD guitarist wants together, urban, jazz-influenced blues band. Have equip. BB, Buddy Guy, Michael Broderick—288-3891, PO Box 967, Westhampton Beach, NY.

DRUMMER, HARD-rock, blues, heavy, wants dependable group with horns. Have equip. Al Hustin—825-7934, 3288 Clifton Ct., Palo Alto, Calif.

CONGA DRUMMER & string bass sought by singer/songwriter/guitarist/flute group, gentle freewheeling folk/jazz sound. Don—863-1191, San Francisco.

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ELECTRIC PIANO looking for experienced musicians who can read. Woodstock area. Jeff Dershin—238-5713, 211 W. Chestnut St., Kingston, NY.

FEMALE SINGER, versatile & exp., looking for musicians for group. Eileen—348-5967, San Francisco.

USED SUNN 200-S & Fender Bandmaster amps; SRO Electrovoice & JBL speakers in indestructible cabinets. It's half price but it's great. 527-1023, Berkeley.

EXP. EQUIPMENT manager, will travel or work in San Diego area, can contribute small light show to performances. I'm cheap. John Lowe—224-8564, 444 W. Point Loma, Apt. 29, San Diego, Calif.

BLUEGRASS HANJO and fiddler wanted for starting jugband. Hopefully unmarried, mobile for touring incl. outside US. Stan Vincent—411-7368, 1770 Filbert St., San Francisco.

AFRICAN PRINT cottons, incense, jewelry, etc. Catalog: mtail, 50c; whst, free. DP Brown—SC 4-9430. TR 4-6450, 109 W. 82nd, New York.

WANTED: LEAD guitarist and lead singer for blues-oriented group w. 2 chicks & guy. (Bass, drums, organ). We have gigs, record connections. Joanne—IV 6-1689, Hempstead, NY.

NEW COFFEE house needs rock & folk musicians, but only if you're together. Moderate bread. Joe McHugh—231-0106, Long Branch, NJ.

BASS PLAYER looking for heavy blues group; double on guitar; equip. & draft no problem; in jail until June 28 (problem). Can write, some recording exp. West coast preferred. William Nowik—Monroe County Penitentiary, 1360 South Ave., Rochester, NY.

HOT BURRITO drummer; blues, country-rock vein. Boston or NY gig preferred, but will travel. Jeremy Fine—887-7938, Norwich, Conn.

ALASKAN LEAD guitarist, just arrived Calif., will play rhythm or bass, need job fast. Can travel. Mike—1617½ Normandie, Hollywood.

LEAD GUITARIST w/amp; drummer w/kit; keyboard man desired. Richard—874-4891, Los Angeles.

WANTED: SINGER with McCartney range (tenor). Original songs in a group. Ron—LI 9-5085, Howard—MI 9-3948, MI 2-3470 (after 6). Philia.

SAXES, FLUTE, vocals. I would like work in pro soul-rock group. Arnold Baruch—626-3608, 301-1533, San Leandro, Calif.

BASSIST, VOCALIST, will be looking for different type of group in Sept. Will be attending SW Mo. State. Will try anything new or strange. Myk Grauda—VI 3-0574, 11109 Golf Crest Dr., St. Louis, Mo.

LEAD GUITARIST, 15-17, wanted to round out trio. Blue Cheer etc. Doug Adashefski—262-2191, 876 Pacific St., New Milford, NJ.

BASSIST, GUITARIST wanted: must have transp., equip., be heavy, dig black blues. Union, H. Holmes—697-6057, 109 Conant, Bridgewater, Mass.

12TH TRIBE needs drummer, rhythm guitarist. Call John Baily—861-9049, (10 to 5), San Francisco.

CORNETIST—14 years exp. rock, jazz, country—read, write, sing, harp, guitar. 23 years old. Donald Savage—828-9837, 301 Hoffman, San Francisco.

10 GUITARISTS needed immediately: 10 & rtm, 1d & base, rtm & bass. Booked for TV show in a few mos. Have material, underground & acid rock. Mustard Gas—516 5th St. East, Rugby, N.D.

EXP. DRUMMER, guitarist, into blues, funk, soulful rock, seek other musicians to jam, maybe start something. Jobs definite possibility. John—243-1586, Seattle.

DRUMMER LOOKING for lead and bass guitarist, hard or acid rock. George Otten—231-3276, Highlands, NJ.

WANTED: APPEALING NY girl, 15-17, to build new musical experience. Zoc. Bill Kutner—896-9649, 63-84 Saunders St., Rego Park, NY.

MALE SINGER, 19, wants job with good band, any type. David—PO Box 434, Palo Alto, Calif.

BASS PLAYER wanted for heavy blues-rock band; over 18. Nickey—994-4238, Brooklyn.

DRUMMER WANTED for trio. Must have own kit, creativity, ambition. Maverick—751-4082, 4615 Balboa No. 5, San Francisco.

PRODUCER NEEDS vocalist for recording. Have bread, material. Send tape & photo. Tom Laney II, Surry Rd., New Canaan, Conn.

INNOVATIVE CHARACTER wants to help develop struggling group of musicians. Can get booking, do other manager-type things—but not for money for me. Mike—771-8851, 7033 SE 8th, Portland, Ore.

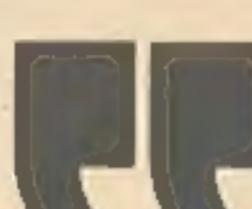
TWO TRACK recording; Ampex, Aitec pro equip. Funky studio, friendly people. \$10/hr. Electra/Cordless Sound Service—788-5174, Sherman Oaks, Calif.

WILL PAY top \$ for old Vox Phantom bass in good condition. Give price. Bill Reid—994 Irene Ct., No. Valley Stream, NY.

TALENTED YOUNG producer with contacts seeks creative people, groups or singles. Johnathan K. Soink Creative Artists—797-3909, 8 Van Ness Road, Binghamton, NY.

"God is a ventriloquist and we're all his dummies."

...BIFF ROSE



BIFF ROSE

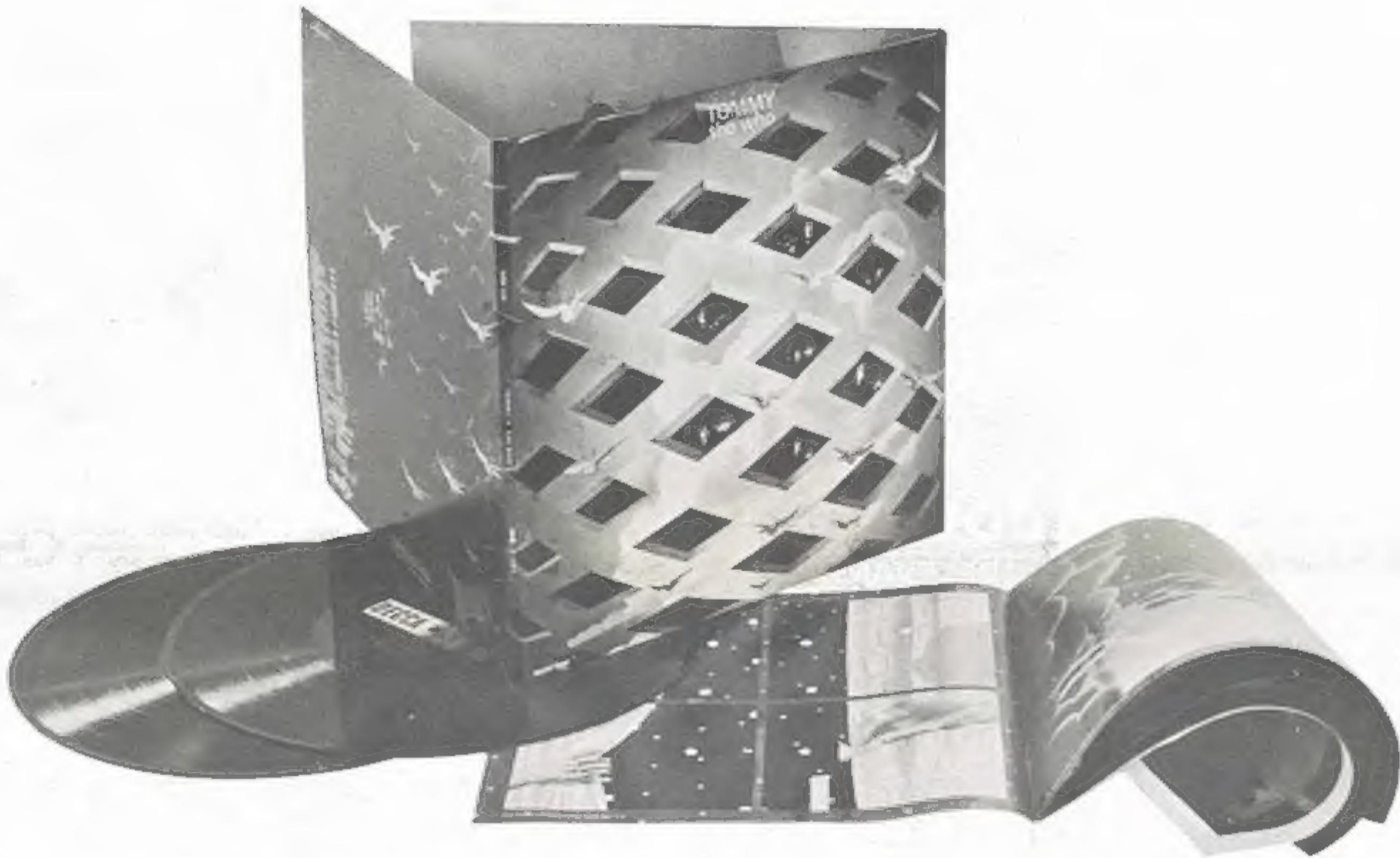
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